

Concordia

Theological Monthly

Vol. XIII

AUGUST, 1942

No. 8

Verbal Inspiration — a Stumbling-Block to the Jews and Foolishness to the Greeks

(Continued)

The moderns are bound to make the "sure Word" of Scripture (2 Pet. 1:19) unreliable. They have been telling the anxious Christian that the "mechanical, verbal theory" of inspiration is all wrong; that according to their dynamical canon the *words* in which the saving truth is revealed are purely human; that nobody knows whether the words of John 3:16 correctly express the divine thought. But they are not yet through with the dismayed Christian. Lest he still be disposed to base his trust on John 3:16 and similar passages of Holy Writ, they now tell him: Forget all about John 3:16; that is an individual statement and individual statements no longer count; it is foolishness to base doctrine and faith on particular passages.

That is the fifth objection of the moderns against Verbal Inspiration. They express their abhorrence of it in the word "atomistic." *The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1937, p. 195, declares: "It is, of course, no secret that Verbal Inspiration is not taught in some of the seminaries of the United Lutheran Church. . . . The purpose [of Professor Kretzmann's *The Foundations Must Stand*] of course is to prove that every word of the Scriptures was inspired directly and immediately. But by thus indiscriminately compiling all passages containing any reference to the word or the words of God and using them as proof texts for Verbal Inspiration, the real Lutheran meaning of the expression Word of God is obscured. What results is a legalistic and an atomistic conception of the Scriptures as the Word of God, far more congenial to Calvinism than to Lutheranism." *The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1939, p. 153, censures "the dogmatists and literalists" and commends those who "broke with the old atomistic method of proof texts." H. E. Fosdick: "Atha-

nasius is typical of the general method of ancient interpretation. 'All parts of the Bible were equally good, in his judgment, as sources of proof texts.' . . . The new approach to the Bible gives us a comprehensive, inclusive view of the Scriptures and enables us to see them not piecemeal but as a whole. . . . It once more integrates the Scriptures, saves us from our piecemeal treatment of them, and restores to us the whole book seen in a unified development." (*The Modern Use of the Bible*, pp. 10, 27.) Atomistic — another one of these great swelling words which are designed to overawe the simple. It is the mark of scientific wisdom to take a comprehensive view of things, is it not? You would not want to study a writing in a piecemeal atomistic fashion, would you? ²⁷³⁾

Let us see, first, what exactly the moderns mean when they rail against the "atomistic method of proof texts" and, secondly, what this attitude towards the Bible involves.

Dr. J. Bodensieck: "May I mention another misuse of the Bible which the Church has often ignored and even condoned? I have in mind the indiscriminate use of Bible texts as proofs in the Catechism, or even in the science of dogmatics. Sometimes only a very superficial study of the text in its original setting in the Bible would have been sufficient to indicate that it was out of place in the Catechism or in the dogmatical discussion, where it was adduced as proof from Scripture. This use of the Bible has recently been branded as 'atomistic.' The Church should avoid every semblance of such abuse. . . . The 'atomistic' practice gives a distorted picture of the Bible and helps to destroy the proper understanding and appreciation of the Bible." (*The Modern Use of the Bible*, in *The Augsburg Sunday School Teacher*, July, 1938, p. 388 ff.) ²⁷⁴⁾ Insisting that inspiration is not a piecemeal affair,

273) The following phrases will show the meaning of our term: "atomistic and fragmentary"; "life is not atomistic, it is corporate." *The Luth. Church. Quart.*, 1939, p. 153, says that the old atomistic method of proof texts is out of harmony with "the organic character of the Scriptures." H. F. Rall has the phrase "organicistic or corporate as against atomistic or individualistic." (*A Faith for Today*, p. 127.) The distinction between atomistic and corporate is, of course, good and necessary. Whether the moderns make the right use of this distinction in the matter before us remains to be seen.

274) The following excerpts from the article will show the writer's position with regard to Verbal Inspiration. "We may indeed find it very difficult to free ourselves from this misuse of the Bible as long as we cling to a very mechanical conception of inspiration. If the Bible, as we have it, is the dictation of the Holy Spirit down to the last letter, we will have to deny the existence in the Bible of various levels of religious understanding and spiritual depth. . . . Too often the Bible is reduced to the level of a well-stocked arsenal from which authoritative proof texts may be drawn almost at random. Instead of enlightening the mind and providing it with some understanding of the

the Bible being inspired "as a whole," not in its statements on "details," J. M. Gibson has this to say to the "proof-texters": "A 'text' from one book was exactly the same as a 'text' from another. It could be cut out from its context and set alongside of a number of others cut out in the same way, to be used as 'proofs' of some controverted doctrine. For all the use men's names were, they might have been blotted out and the word 'God' put in instead. . . . The erroneous impression conveyed by the words is due to the old practice, so fruitful in error, of treating the Bible as a mere collection of texts, anyone of which may be taken by itself and treated as if it stood alone." (*The Inspiration and Authority of Holy Scripture*, pp. 74, 121, 222, 234.) V. Ferm, reading the requiem on Verbal Inspiration: "A literally infallible Bible, an assumption implied throughout the Lutheran symbols, verbally inspired, is a view that has passed by the board for good," declares: "Passages may no longer be wrested from their context and indiscriminately ascribed to 'the word of the Lord.'" (*What Is Lutheranism?* pp. 281 f.); and H. Wheeler Robinson makes the same indictment: "The Protestant appeal to the Scriptures as a text-book of doctrine did frequent violence to exegesis, and much of it reads strangely enough to us today." (*The Chr. Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 173.) The moderns take pleasure in reciting cases of such strange exegesis. Georgia Harkness: "As for the Bible, most people, at least most people sufficiently informed to be ministers of the Gospel, recognize the dangers inherent in the proof-text method. It is a truism that one can prove anything one likes from the Bible. In the last Presidential election, there was plastered in every New York subway train as a party slogan the affirmation, 'Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'" (*The Faith by Which the Church Lives*, p. 56.) O. L. Joseph: "Is not the practice of quoting texts at random, without regard to their context, largely responsible for many vagaries of the religious imagination, such as Christian Science, Theosophy, Spiritualism? It is worth recalling that the dogma of total de-

Bible, this practice actually obscures it by making it appear that every portion of the Book is authoritative doctrine—perhaps an extremist exegesis of 2 Tim. 3:16f. contributed to this error. The Bible is no collection of doctrinal statements, but a book of life. . . . Those who followed them" [the Protestant fathers] "codified and systematized their thoughts and, in so doing, introduced the deplorable confusion of contents and form and ascribed to each the same divine authority. But if the same unfailing authority is ascribed to all the 'human' elements in the Bible (e. g., categories of thought, the picture of the universe, even the fundamental ideas of ethical living) as to the unquestionably divine truths, then conflicts are inevitable and doubts must arise. . . . This, in my judgment, is the one valuable contribution in Fosdick's book *The Modern Use of the Bible*, viz., his distinction between the Bible's central messages and their temporary expressions."

pravity taught by St. Augustine was based upon five proof texts, three of which were mistranslations." (*Ringling Realities*, p. 218.) We read in the *Watchman-Examiner* of Dec. 28, 1941: "Communicants of the Apostolic Faith Church of Pittsburgh who were also members of the United Mine Workers were hard put to it, with their literalistic dependence upon the exact words of the English Bible, to determine their duty under the captive mines strike order. Surely enough, the strike was called by their 'higher-up' bosses, and they must be 'subject to the higher powers' (Rom. 13:1). . . . In like manner, the proof-text method of interpreting the Bible has caused great numbers of earnest, sincere people to do all sorts of absurd things." And Prof. J. C. W. Volck (Dorpat) went to the trouble of illustrating the absurdity of the atomistic proof-text method by quoting one half of Ps. 14:1: "There is no God." (See *Proc. Syn. Conf.*, 1886, p. 24.) — And that, say the moderns, is what we mean when we denounce the atomistic proof-text method: it is not permissible to quote texts at random and tear them out of their context.

There is something wrong here. There is nothing wrong about denouncing the *indiscriminate* use of proof texts. But a wrong is committed when this denunciation is coupled with the denunciation of Verbal Inspiration. The moderns have the habit of doing that. J. S. Whale fulminates thus: "The modern man is not impressed by the mere citation of texts; he rightly wants to understand them in their context. His very certainty that the Scriptures are the fount of divine wisdom . . . has set him free from the bondage of the letter, the prison house of verbal infallibility. . . . The Bible is abused when it is used merely as an armory of proof texts for defending some theological scheme (a game at which more than one can play, notoriously enough). We use the Bible rightly only when, to quote Luther, we see that it is the cradle wherein Christ is laid; that is, when we worship the Holy Child and not His crib." (*The Chr. Answer to the Problem of Evil*, p. 77.) The modern man is right in demanding that the text be quoted in its context. But why should Dr. Whale inveigh in this connection against the "prison house of verbal infallibility"? Note, too, that the *Luth. Church Quart.*, in denouncing the indiscriminate compiling of "proof texts," informs us that "Verbal Inspiration is not taught in some of the seminaries of the U. L. C." Note that the *Augsburg Sunday School Teacher* article, while castigating "the indiscriminate use of Bible texts as proofs," disavows "the mechanical conception of inspiration," "the dictation of the Holy Spirit down to the last letter," and speaks of the "'human' elements in the Bible," mistaken notions, etc. Note that Gibson, who will not have "a text cut from its context," takes a fling at the verbal-

inspirationists who declare that *God is the real author of these books*. There is something wrong here. Verbal Inspiration has nothing to do with the illicit quoting of proof texts. The verbal inspirationists insist as strongly as the most liberal modern that when a text is quoted as a proof the literal sense of the text, the scope, and the context must be scrupulously observed. If Augustine based the dogma of total depravity on two proof texts, he won his case; if he based it in three instances on mistranslations, he did not do that because he believed in Verbal Inspiration. There is nothing in the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration that justifies, or even lends itself to, the misuse of the proof-text method. To be sure, verbal-inspirationists occasionally quote a text wrongly. But the same can be said of the anti-verbal-inspirationists. We can easily match every *lapsus* committed in this field by verbal-inspirationists with one committed by the dynamic-inspirationists and the non-inspirationists.²⁷⁵ So you can hardly make Verbal Inspiration responsible for the use of misquotations. And when you produce your lists of misquotations for the purpose of discrediting Verbal Inspiration, you are aiming your blows at a straw man.

But in denouncing the "old atomistic method of proof texts" the moderns whom we have quoted and shall quote do not really mean the illicit use of proof texts. If they meant that, there would be no quarrel between us and them. Here we are one with them.²⁷⁶

275) Gibson proves his idea that the texts of Scripture are not binding with the proof text: "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." (*Op. cit.*, p. 235.) N. R. Best proves that Scripture is subject to reason with the proof text *Is. 1:18*. (*Inspiration*, p. 118.) Dr. H. C. Alleman (*Luth. Church Quart.*, 1940, p. 356) proves that Christ "deliberately breaks Scripture" by quoting *Matt. 5:38f.*, and H. F. Rall quotes the same text to prove that "you cannot accept the supremacy of Christ and hold to the infallibility of the Bible." (*Op. cit.*, p. 224.) Fosdick cites as proof text for his dogma that "at the beginning Hebrew religion had no hope of immortality" *Eccl. 9:4-6* and *3:19*. (*Op. cit.*, p. 25.) R. F. Horton proves that "the epistle of James disclaims infallibility" with the proof text: "In many things we offend all," *Jas. 3:2*. (*Revelation and the Bible*, p. 349.) H. W. Robinson proves that the prophets had "beneficent illusions" by quoting *Jer. 20:7*: "O Lord, Thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived." (*Op. cit.*, p. 174.) We have seen how the proof text *2 Tim. 3:16* fares at the hands of the moderns. (See, for example, the eighth installment of this series, No. 21.) Sherwood Eddy: "Can we claim that this (the Virgin Birth) is a foremost fundamental if, as we have seen, it has never been mentioned by Jesus or Paul, or in the first or last Gospel?" (See *The Presbyterian*, Dec. 22, 1927.) There are several queer things in this item. — Yes, to employ Whale's phraseology, the moderns, too, can play at the game of wrong proof-texting and they are quite adept at it.

276) Cutting a text out of its context certainly may be called an atomistic use of Scripture. Verbal inspirationists so use the term. Dr. Reu writes: "Even the formation of the word was taught by the Spirit. . . . So *1 Cor. 2:13*, while not being the only proof passage for the *suggestio verbi*, is nevertheless an important statement concerning the

But what the moderns do not like and do not want is any and every use of proof texts for the establishment of doctrine. It will not be hard to establish that point. Let them tell us what they think, not of the illicit use of proof texts, but of their use in general.

Schleiermacher, the Father of modern Protestant Theology, declared: "Quoting individual Bible passages in dogmatics is a most precarious business and cannot at all serve the purpose." (*Glaubenslehre*, I, § 30.) Notice that there is here no restriction. Not only the wresting of the passage out of its context is bad business; quoting individual passages is bad business. That has become an article of faith with the moderns. G. T. Ladd: "Especially was *suggestion of the words* held to be necessary to the inspiration of the Bible. . . . Especially strong and dominating was the tendency among those who held this dogma to regard the entire Bible as a kind of theological parade ground for proof texts. It was the *number* of such proof texts which was chiefly regarded." (*What Is the Bible?* P. 56 f.) *The Christian Century*, March 2, 1938: "No issue between the churches can now be settled by the quotation of a Biblical text, as our fathers used to assume. No issue will be settled by reference to an authoritarian standard, whether *doctrinal*" (our italics) "or ecclesiastical." They express their dissatisfaction with the fathers' way in the word "proof-texting." *The Chr. Century*, Feb. 22, 1939, praises "the inexhaustible resources of beauty and grandeur" in the Bible, but hastens to add: "This does not mean that we shall be saved by a return to proof-texting. Perish the thought!" The fathers are to be pitied, for, says H. F. Rall, "revelation meant to them so many doctrines or commandments handed down or so many words dictated to a writer. . . . When Paul wrote to his little churches here and there, he surely had not the faintest idea that centuries later theologians would be building up their theories on this phrase or that sentence in his letters." (*Op. cit.*, p. 228 f.) The poor fathers! "Luther's slavish dependence on proof texts" is the phrase used by G. Aulén; he adds the further statement: "Biblicism, the application of the theory of verbal inspiration, has laid a heavy hand on Christian theology." (*Das christliche Gottesbild*, p. 251.) No slavish dependence on proof texts for us, the children of the Reformation, declared the theologians gathered at Eisenach in 1917 to celebrate the four-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. "Restricted, yet free!

question in hand. . . . We do not see any reason why we should eliminate 1 Cor. 2:13 from our discussion. Still less do we stoop to what some call an 'atomistic use of Scripture' when we refer to this passage, because the whole context speaks exactly of the same matter with which we are dealing here." (*Kirchl. Zeitschrift*, July, 1939, p. 421.) The trouble is, however, that with our moderns the "atomistic use of Scripture" means much more than this.

Restricted to the revelation within the Scriptures as a whole; restricted to the Christ of God whom the Scriptures urge. But free over against particular matters, free to form our opinion on the human garments in which the divine glory of the Scriptures is masked. . . . One service the Scriptures will, of course, no longer be able to render: they cannot by particular statements authenticate particular parts of the Confessions." And "this means," says the *Theol. Mthly.*, V, p. 7, "that under the operation of the slogan 'Restricted, yet free!' such things as proof texts cease to exist." And so it goes on and on. It seems impossible for a modern to write a book or an article on Inspiration without taking occasion to utter his disgust with the old atomistic proof-text method. M. Dods: "The Bible has so persistently been used as a textbook to prove dogma that this came to be considered its main use. . . . Each of its utterances, no matter in what department of truth, was supposed to be final and authoritative. . . . But the Bible must not be thought of as a collection of truths formulated in propositions which God from time to time whispered in the ear to be communicated to the world as the unchanging formulas of thought and life for all time." (*The Bible, Its Origin and Nature*, pp. 66, 97.) E. E. Flack: "No fundamental doctrine rests on a single isolated passage. Nor may several passages strung together in proof-text fashion fix faith. It requires the analogy of Scripture, the whole Scripture corroborating and authenticating its own testimony in the life of the true Church, to establish the truth as it is in Christ Jesus." (*The Lutheran*, Oct. 1, 1936.) W. A. Brown: "What we need in such a textbook is a compendium of simple principles capable of indefinite application and therefore needing continual reinterpretation in the light of expanding experience. We have seen that the Bible lends itself to such uses in a pre-eminent degree. But that is not the way those who are responsible for teaching the Bible have used it. Either (like the theologians) they have made it a dogmatic textbook, searching its pages for proof texts which could be made a test of orthodoxy or. . . ." (*A Creed for Free Men*, p. 230.) Sherwood Eddy expresses the idea of the moderns exactly when he rails at "a literal, orthodox Christianity based on an inerrant, verbally inspired, infallible Book" and declares: "The Bible is not intended as a storehouse of authoritative proof texts or pious mottoes, not as a shibboleth or a fetish or mystic book to be read for merit. It is not a mechanical, external authority to be blindly obeyed." (See *The Presbyterian*, Dec. 22, 1927.) The moderns will not own Luther in his slavish dependence on proof texts as their spiritual father. Let them, then, own themselves as children of the vulgar rationalists, one of whom, Heinrich Stephani, was not ashamed to lay down these principles in his *Winke zur Vervollkommnung des Konfir-*

mandenunterrichts: "Only that may be taught which Jesus and His apostles would teach if they lived today. . . . Bible passages must not be used as proof texts." (See *Kirchl. Zeitschr.*, 1939, p. 137.)²⁷⁷

The moderns frown upon and denounce the use of proof texts for the establishing of the Christian doctrine. To illustrate, what does the Bible teach on the Atonement? The proof texts will not help you to find that out, says E. Grubb; the teaching of the Bible on this point is hidden somewhere else. "An actual illustration of

277) We submit a few more pronouncements dictated by the proof-text-method phobia. We do not like to clutter up our pages with such material, but those who still think that, when the moderns reject the proof-text method, they have only the illicit use of proof texts in mind can use it. C. H. Dodd: "The method of reading the Pauline epistles as a set of documentary proofs for a fixed scheme of theology has resulted in giving a quite erroneous idea of Paul's real thought and, still more, in effectually concealing Paul the man behind a theological lay figure." (*The Authority of the Bible*, p. 12.) H. W. Robinson: "The revelation must be sought in that experience in its entirety rather than in particular 'texts' taken from it. . . . The Bible has often been degraded to the level of the *sortes Virgilianae*, a verbal oracle mechanically used." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 170, 175.) Gibson's statement on "treating the Bible as a mere collection of texts" goes on to say: "Some people, indeed, think that it is an end of all controversy to say, 'There it is in black and white.'" G. Wehrung: "Der evangelische Schriftgebrauch ist pneumatischer Art; er sucht nicht Lehrformeln oder Beweisstellen, sondern Leben weckende Zeugnisse; er sucht in und hinter diesen mannigfachen Christusbekenntnissen die innere Einheit, das eine Evangelium, das eine Gotteswort in den vielen Worten." (*Geschichte und Glaube*, p. 306.) The *Living Church*, March 9, 1938: "The Report of the Commission on Christian Doctrine states that 'stages of Biblical revelation are to be judged in relation to its historical climax,' the standard being 'the mind of Christ as unfolded in the experience of the Church.' The significance of this section of the report lies chiefly in its bearing upon homiletics. As 'the method of direct appeal to isolated texts' is so evidently liable to error, it is to be expected that preaching from isolated texts will gradually give place to genuine expository preaching in which the Word of God *contained*" (italics in original) "in the Scripture will be sought, studied in all the light that modern scholarship affords, and then applied to problems of the modern world." The sentence introducing this paragraph reads: "In the report of the Anglican Commission, so-called Fundamentalism receives its *coup de grace*. Explicitly and in forceful terms the Commission states its conviction that 'the tradition of the inerrancy of the Bible cannot be maintained in the light of the knowledge now at our disposal.'" The *Luth. Church Quart.*, 1939, p. 33 ff., has this to say on our subject: "There is a spirit of legalism that pervades many of the ranks of Midwestern Lutherans, a kind of approach to the truth of God which insists on 'book, chapter, and verse' for all the 'eye-blinks' of life and must be undergirded by the authority of print on paper for every conscious breath in order to be assured of full salvation. In its last analysis this resolves itself into a conception of the Holy Scriptures as a mechanical work of the Holy Spirit, inerrant in every word and detail in its original form." The *Lutheran* reprinted this Feb. 8, 1939. Prof. R. F. Grau: "Die Heilige Schrift ist uns nicht mehr ein grosser vom Himmel herab gesandter Gesetzeskodex mit seinen einzelnen Paragraphen Beweisstellen" (proof texts) "genannt." (See Baier-Walther, *Compendium*, I, p. 102.)

the appeal to the authority of the Bible may help in making clear what is meant. Suppose we are in doubt about the doctrine of Atonement and we wish to know, either for ourselves or for meeting the doubts of others, what the Bible teaches on the subject. The older method was to quote certain texts from the New Testament, such as those that refer to 'propitiation' and 'the blood of Christ,' and then to show that the doctrine of a blood sacrifice for sin, satisfying the wrath of God, ran through the whole of the Old Testament." That is all wrong. You must first establish "what are the different strains of teaching which the Bible contains" and then find out how much of this teaching "answers the deepest demands of our own reason and conscience. . . . The indiscriminate use of Scripture as a single source of equal value, as a quarry from every part of which stones may be indifferently collected to build up the temple of constructive dogmatics, will, it is hoped, soon pass away never to return." (*The Bible, Its Nature and Inspiration*, p. 240 ff.) May we use proof texts to prove the deity of Jesus? O. J. Baab tells us: "The Gospel of Matthew . . . made a liberal use of quotations from the Old Testament. These are *extracted from their context*" (our italics) "and made to fit the story of Jesus." Again: "Did Jesus believe that He was the Son of God? We have no uncontaminated first-hand reports of his utterances on the subject of God." "Current concepts as to deity and ideas of the supernatural definitely influenced the writers of the New Testament in their selection and interpretation of available material." So we cannot rely on these particular statements of the holy writers; their sense must be established by other considerations. Dr. Baab is right in concluding: "No wonder the literalistic interpreters of the Bible are stirred to indignant and vehement protest." (*Jesus Christ Our Lord*, pp. 11, 13, 38.) What about the doctrine of the Virgin Birth? E. Brunner: "In earlier days this discussion" (of the theory of the Virgin Birth) "used to be cut short by saying briefly, 'It is written'; that is, with the aid of the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration. Today we can no longer do this, even if we would. There are many indications that, even in this respect, even these early passages of Matthew and Luke once read very differently. Those arguments, however, are not adduced here in order to attack the doctrine itself, for this would be wholly out of keeping with the spirit of the rest of this book. All that is intended here is to show once more that the process of producing arguments and proofs based on Scripture, which is also untenable on general grounds, is here especially unfortunate." (*The Mediator*, p. 323 f.) Are there any *dicta probantia*, any *sedes doctrinae*, for the doctrine of the Church? No, indeed, says the *Luth. Church Quart.*, 1940, p. 20: "The doctrine of the Church does not rest on

specific proof texts, but on the entire Biblical message, the center of which is God's forgiving grace. It rests on the Bible understood and interpreted as an organic unity having its center in the cross, or in justification by faith, or in grace." An introductory statement was: "An atomistic or legalistic attitude results in trying to make specific New Testament words and sayings binding as external forms on the Church." What do the moderns think of the theologian who bases his eschatological teaching on the pertinent Bible texts? F. Holmstroem calls him a slovenly, piddling theologian, calls his exegesis "schlendrianmaessige biblizistische Reproduktion." He reads the proof-text theologian this lesson: "Eine theologisch haltbare Eschatologie muss vielmehr ihre Aussagen organisch aus dem lebendigen Zentrum der biblischen Offenbarung, der 'Christustatsache,' herleiten." (*Das Eschatologische Denken der Gegenwart*, p. 312.) Should we base our teaching on the sin against the Holy Ghost on specific passages, such as Matt. 12:31, 32; Heb. 6:1-8 and 10:26? R. F. Horton examines these passages and ends up with the monstrous proposition: "Here, then, is a case in which, so far from believing that a doctrine must be a divine revelation because it occurs in the New Testament, we are forced to the opinion that, if it occurs in the New Testament, it is not a revelation, but merely a view of the author's, imperfect and limited as the judgments of even inspired men are apt on occasion to be. In other words, the revelation of God as a whole, the revelation in its crowned completeness, must be used as a criterion for determining the value of individual passages in the Scriptures; it can never be admitted that a single passage or even a small group of passages, teaching a special doctrine, may override the truth in its entirety when its full development is reached." (*Revelation and the Bible*, p. 337 f.)

We are at present particularly interested in the doctrine of inspiration. May we use proof texts for this all-important doctrine? *The Luth. Church Quart.* chides us for doing this: using proof texts to establish Verbal Inspiration results in a legalistic and an atomistic conception of the Scriptures, far more congenial to Calvinism than to Lutheranism. (See above.) "Luthardt simply ignores 2 Tim. 3:16, when he treats of the doctrine of inspiration and insists: 'Das Selbstzeugnis der Schrift beruht nicht sowohl auf einzelnen Stellen der Schrift, sondern auf der Schrift selbst, in dem Schriftganzen, und da ist es Aufgabe der Schriftwissenschaft, zu zeigen, in welchem Sinn man sie inspiriert nennen koenne.' It follows that the plowman or factory hand cannot know whether Scripture has been given by divine inspiration, and when he confronts Luthardt with the Scripture: 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God' and says, 'Here it is written,' Luthardt an-

swers: Brother, you cannot say that; it is the whole of Scripture that decides the matter; you must not operate with these individual passages." (Dr. Walther; see *Lehre und Wehre*, 1911, p. 151.)

The moderns abhor the proof-text method and stigmatize it as atomistic. It is *not* the illicit use of proof texts which they have in mind when they use this word. Sometimes they mention and stress the illicit method, but before long they reveal that it is the proof-text method in general which they abhor. The *Luth. Church Quart.*, 1940, p. 20, comes right into the open and declares that the use of specific proof texts to establish doctrines reveals an atomistic attitude. (See above.) The *Luth. Church Quart.*, 1937, p. 279 is equally clear on this point: "The Bible must never be thought of apart from the living, unitary Word and become a codex. Otherwise we have Bibliolatry and substitute a book for the creative Word. . . . The Fundamentalists make the Bible literalistic and legalistic in a Calvinistic manner, and forget that the letter killeth but the Spirit maketh alive. Out of the legalistic attitude toward the Word of God of the Bible has grown an atomistic conception of the Word, which substitutes words for the Word. The Word is not built up out of inspired words like atoms underlying the universe."²⁷⁸ And the others of the moderns who do indeed specify the "indiscriminate use of Bible texts" in condemning the "atomistic" use of Scripture have more in mind than that. Else they would not go on to declare as the *Augsburg S. S. Teacher* article does, that not everything in the Bible is authoritative doctrine, that everything is not of the same divine authority, that here are "human" elements — errors — in the Bible, that the Holy Ghost did not dictate everything "down to the last letter." Notice, too, how they couple "legalistic" with "atomistic." "The indiscriminate use of proof texts" implies "a legalistic and an atomistic conception of the Scriptures" — there is not much sense in calling the illicit use of proof texts legalistic. Legalistic, in the language of the moderns means that the words are binding. Our *Luth. Church Quart.* article did not mean the "indiscriminate" but *all* use of proof texts. And so the phrase "the old atomistic method

278) Some more statements in this article by Dr. J. A. W. Haas will prove informative: "The older theory made men mere passive receivers of the Word. Their minds were pictured as blank slates on which the Spirit of the Word wrote his messages. . . . The atomistic verbalists err in not valuing the living logic of language. . . . The term 'words' (in 1 Cor. 2:13) is taken to mean every single word down to the minutest 'and.' . . . Out of the minute verbalistic conception grows the problem of the infallibility of the Word. Extreme verbalism demands the completeness of the text in every detail. It posits an original perfect text for all the books of the Bible. . . . It is a mere fiction to uphold an infallibility in every statement and not merely in the essentials of faith."

of proof texts" (see above) means that the method of using proof texts at all is atomistic. The word *atomistic* is there not used restrictively but descriptively. Or will the writer say that, when the fathers used proof texts, they regularly and habitually ignored the literal sense, the scope, and the context? ²⁷⁹⁾ No, the fathers made habitual use of the *legitimate* proof-text method, based the doctrine on the *dicta probantia*, the *sedes doctrinae*, and that is what our moderns stigmatize as the old atomistic method.

And they feel perfectly justified in calling that atomistic. We agreed with them that we would call that an atomistic use of Scripture when a text is quoted out of its context and in a sense not intended by the author. And that, say the moderns, precisely that, lies at the bottom of our argument against the proof-text method. You verbalists are content to quote isolated passages. You fail to take the wider context into consideration. You verbalists may have the literal sense on your side, but insisting on the literal sense, you become literalists. You fail to see the broader sense with which the "Word of God" contained in Scripture or the "whole of Scripture" or this or that or the other thing invests this text.

Let Professor Volck tell us something about this broader context. "Um die Sonderung des Gebietes des Untrueglichen von demjenigen, wo Irrtum moeglich ist, und weiter — die Scheidung vom Wesentlichen und Unwesentlichen in der Bibel vollziehen zu koennen, muss der Ausleger *alles einzelne* ihres Inhalts beurteilen nach seinem *Verhaeltnis zu dem Heil*, welches in der von ihr berichteten Geschichte verwirklicht vorliegt. Er muss zusehen, ob und in *welchem* Zusammenhang es mit demselben steht." It is not sufficient to consider what common hermeneutics calls the context. You must study the relation of the individual passage to, and connection with, the whole history of salvation, before you can determine whether the passage is true or erroneous. Dr. A. L. Graebner comments: "Volck need not tell us that you must not wrest a text out of its connection. We, too, know that you must always consider the context. But Volck says: Even if I perfectly understand the words of a passage in its connection and context, I know nothing at all about the matter; for I will still have to find out what the

²⁷⁹⁾ Further on in this article (*Luth. Church Quart.*, 1939, p. 153ff.) we read: "It must be maintained in the light of the recent history of theology that the day of compartmentalizing and isolating theology from the rest of human thinking and knowing has long since passed. . . . The business of theology has always been to define what is of faith and what is contrary to faith. But such definitions cannot come to rest in isolation from the total existing body of human knowledge. . . . The *Loci* of the Jena theologian [Gerhard] necessarily retained in many parts the serious limitations of a prescientific heritage both in method and conclusions." More on this anon.

passage means in its relation to the whole of Scripture." (See *Proc. Syn. Conf.*, 1886, p. 23 f.) The hermeneutics of the moderns requires the consideration of the *broader context*. Neglect that, and your exegesis becomes atomistic.

What is this broader context? Some of the moderns make it extremely broad. They insist that the individual passages must be viewed in the light of present-day science. All human knowledge forms an organic whole, and statements of the Bible must not be put in opposition to it. Condemning "the old atomistic method of proof texts," the *Luth. Church Quart.* (1939, p. 156) inveighs against "compartmentalizing and isolating theology from the rest of human thinking and knowing." The definitions of theology must not "come to rest in isolation from the total existing body of human knowledge." Would that mean that a specific text could no longer be used as a proof text since "science" has shown it to be in error? Most assuredly. The Anglican Commission has proclaimed that "the tradition of the inerrancy of the Bible cannot be maintained in the light of the knowledge now at our disposal." They tell the Bible-Christian: Do not be atomistic! Bring your Bible text into harmony with the whole of human knowledge by stripping it of its literal sense and finding the profounder, the prophetic sense intended. The story of the Creation and of the Fall are not to be taken literally; Jonah was not literally swallowed by the great fish; let the theologian find out for you what deeper truths are here hidden. "They are, says *Christendom*, I, p. 492, "poetic expressions of some profounder or larger truth than that which their formulators realized." And that applies to the teachings of the Bible in general. H. E. Fosdick: "It is impossible that a book written two or three thousand years ago should be used in the twentieth century A. D. without having some of its forms of thoughts and speech translated into modern categories." (*Op. cit.*, p. 885.) To retain the literal sense of the teaching concerning resurrection and the deity of Christ would be a piecemeal, atomistic treatment of these proof texts. Consider the wider context furnished by the growth of human knowledge that have set in since the Bible days.

One of the first rules inculcated by the anti-atomistic hermeneutics is: Give up your belief in the inerrancy of the Bible. C. H. Dodd, who condemns "the method of reading the Pauline epistles as a set of documentary proofs," goes on to say: "When the reader has discovered what the writer actually said and meant, he wants to ask further, Is this what I am to believe about God? Is it *true*? Probably no one who reads this book will think that this question has the self-evident answer, Of course it is true, *because it is in the Bible*." (*Op. cit.*, p. 297. — Italics in original.) The *Augsburg S. S. Teacher* article, which inveighs against the atomistic

use of the Bible, speaks of the "human" elements, the erroneous statements, in the Bible and calls Fosdick's statement concerning the "temporary expressions" and "modern categories" a "valuable contribution." Dr. Haas, who does not like the "atomistic verbalists," insists that the theologians must no longer uphold the absolute infallibility of the Bible, its "infallibility in every statement." That is the reason why the Eisenach Convention rejected the *indiscriminate* use of proof texts: some of them may belong to "the human garments"; you cannot take them at their face value; you must use discrimination. And the Anglican Commission, convinced of the errancy of the Bible, tells the preachers that they must not use a proof text till science, etc., has proved that it is true.

That is rather crude, to let science and the ideology of modernism, etc., shed light on the individual passages. But the moderns have, in addition, something more spiritual to appeal to. That is the "spirit." Georgia Harkness, who recognizes "the dangers inherent in the proof-text method," finds her "authority not in the letter but in the Spirit." The text must not be taken literally. For that she is fighting, and she deplores the fact "that the battle is not yet won. Like the poor, literalism is always with us" (*op. cit.*, p. 57 f.). Dr. Haas complains that these "atomistic verbalists," these "Fundamentalists, make the Bible literalistic and legalistic in a Calvinistic manner and forget that the letter killeth but the Spirit maketh alive" (*loc. cit.*). V. Ferm, who will "no longer have passages wrested from their context," declares: "The authority of the Sacred Writings is no longer found in 'the letter' and sustained by some artificial theory of divine inspiration, but in the appeal of its spiritual content." (*Op. cit.*, p. 279.) That is pretty plain language. Passages must not be wrested from their context, the context in the old narrow sense; but neither must they be wrested from their true setting, taken out of their spiritual setting. It is exactly what the old Rationalists and their children, the Unitarians, contend for, exactly what the Unitarian W. E. Channing contends for: "We feel it our bounden duty to exercise our reason upon the Bible perpetually, to compare, to infer, to look beyond the letter to the spirit . . .; and, in general, to make use of what is known for explaining what is difficult, and for discovering new truths." (*Works of W. E. C.*, p. 368.) Ferm may have a different idea of what the "spirit" as opposed to the "letter" is than Channing has — none of them has ever told us exactly what this "spirit" is — but all of these men are agreed that you cannot use a proof text till its real meaning has been established, not from what the words in themselves say, but from what the "spirit" says they mean, or from what "the mind of Christ" reveals (Anglican Commission).

More definite information about this context in the wider sense. It is the "Word of God" that determines which parts of Scripture are true or what value they have. Scripture itself is not the Word of God. The Word of God is *contained* in Scripture, and everything else therein must be brought into harmony with this Word. The Anglican Commission warns against "preaching from isolated texts" and instructs the preachers first to seek and study "the Word of God *contained* in the Scriptures," then study this Word of God "*in all the light that modern scholarship affords*" (our italics), and then see what they can do with a given text. The *Luth. Church Quart.*, 1935, pp. 258, 200, 264, tells us something about the nature of this Word of God and its relation to individual passages. "An individual brooding upon some condition of life, meditating upon some truth, communing with that beyond himself to which he gave the name God, and setting what he saw in life into the light of what he perceived through his spiritual insight, became convinced of a great truth. He felt that the truth thus communicated was the will of God for him for a people. 'The word of God came to him.' It was the word of God in the soul of a man. . . . Seekers for authority in Scripture cannot therefore find it in isolated portions and texts of the Bible, a procedure often followed in the effort to prove certain teachings and doctrines. The idea of verbal inspiration and the practice of literal interpretation may destroy the reality of the Bible's message. Its authority is not to be identified with the form of the language which announces the truth of God, but must be found in the light of the experience through which the word of God came to the soul of a man. . . . The teacher of religion speaks with confidence not because he quotes a Scripture but because the word of God has found him." The reality, the value, of a given text does not lie in the words of the text — a literal interpretation may destroy its value — but in its relation to the "Word of God." Dr. Haas, we heard, applies the same hermeneutics. "The Bible and its books are the depository and record of the Living Word. It must never be thought of apart from the living, unitary Word, and become a codex. Otherwise we have Bibliolatry and substitute a book for the creative Word. . . . The Word is not built up out of inspired words." Is John 3:16 inspired? That depends. First place it in the light of "the Word," and it may become a good proof text. Proof texts in themselves cannot prove a doctrine, said Dr. E. E. Flack. "No fundamental doctrine rests on a single isolated passage. Nor may several passages strung together in proof-text fashion fix faith." Then what proves the truth and value of a doctrine? Dr. Flack continues: "The standard by which all dogmas and teachers are to be judged is *not the Scriptures standing alone, but the Word of God* attested and authenticated

in the Spirit-filled life of the early Church and projected through the centuries from faith to faith in the corporate mind of the true Church." (*Loc. cit.*) And Professor Wehrung told us that you must go back of the Biblical statements concerning Christ in order to find the "one Word of God in the many words"; standing alone, they are only words. — In our next installment we shall further examine this hazy concept "Word of God" and the evil use to which the moderns put it.

The method in greatest favor with the moderns, taking the place of the proof-text method that has been thrown to the moles and the bats, is to operate with the *Schriftganze*. The whole of Scripture, Scripture in its entirety, is the great regulative of the individual passages. It was Schleiermacher who got modern theology to substitute for the proof-text method ("quoting individual Bible passages in dogmatics is a most precarious business") the *Schriftganze* method; the doctrine must be based on "Scripture in its entirety," on "the organic whole of Scripture." "Practically all chief representatives of modern theology," says Pieper (*Chr. Dog.*, I, p. 243), "from the extreme left to the extreme right wing, have adopted this method. Ihmels has it; Hofmann had it." Hofmann: "Nicht auf einzelne gottgewirkte Aussprueche oder Buecher in der Schrift beziehen sich Jesus und seine Apostel, sondern auf *die Schrift*. . . . Also die *Gesamtheit* der Schrift ist das einige Wort Gottes fuer seine Gemeinde. *Als Ganzes ist sie es*, und will nichts in ihr unterschieden sein, was nicht dafuer gaelte, und nichts dafuer gelten, was sich ausser ihr faende." (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1875, p. 323.) We cannot quite understand the last sentence. It seems to make everything in Scripture God's Word, but that would be in contradiction to the general statement, which is very clear, that Scripture in its totality is God's Word, not in its individual statements, and that, like Jesus and His apostles, we must not operate with particular statements in Scripture.²⁸⁰ Dr. J. Aberly makes the unassailable statement: "We need the whole Scriptures to give us the whole truth regarding God, man, and salvation," but he continues: "This attitude that we need the total view of Scriptural teaching rather than the fragmentary quotations of isolated passages, and that in this total view we must have the Spirit of Jesus to differentiate between

280) "*Gottgewirkte Aussprueche*" — that is a queer phrase. We could not use it. But Hofmann means exactly what the phrase states. He does not believe in verbal inspiration. He teaches that the prophets and apostles spoke and wrote only under a special influence of the Spirit. Kliefoth points that out and declares: "Von einer Eingebung des Inhalts der Heiligen Schrift durch den Geist Gottes ist keine Rede. . . . Hofmann kommt schliesslich doch zu einer Anschauung von der Heiligen Schrift, die sich im wesentlichen von der rationalistischen nicht unterscheidet." (See *Lehre und Wehre*, *loc. cit.*)

what is temporary and what is permanent, this attitude will be found to be that of the New Testament writers and of Jesus Himself toward that unique revelation of God which we have in the Old Testament." (*The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1935, p. 118.) We need not point out that Jesus and the apostles actually did operate with "fragmentary quotations of isolated passages." What we want to point out is that according to the theory of "Scripture as a whole" we need the Holy Spirit to tell us just how much of Scripture is reliable. The moderns are actually teaching that not individual texts but only the *Schriftganze* is reliable.²⁸¹ It amounts to the same thing when they appeal from the proof texts to "the Bible understood and interpreted as an *organic unity* having its center in the cross" (see above) or to "the *living center*, the 'Christustatsache'" (Holmstroem), to "the *inner content* of the revelation instead of its literary expression and record" (H. W. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 175), to "the *fundamental principles* of Scriptural teaching," etc. The moderns actually go so far as to proclaim it as their firm conviction that the whole of Scripture is inspired though individual passages are not inspired. J. M. Gibson: "Let it be noticed also that in this historical process of revelation we have not only relief from the most serious difficulties attaching to the view of verbal inspiration equally distributed through all the books, but also a strong and most striking confirmation of our faith in the divine inspiration of the Bible as a whole. . . . Remember, it is no question of details — of flies or lice or frogs. . . . The absolute inerrancy of every word of Scripture" is immaterial; what counts is "the substance or the spirit, the object and effect, of the whole." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 74, 77, 121.) Dr. M. Doerne finds that many portions of Scripture are purely human, erroneous; but nothing is lost as long as Scripture as a whole is recognized as "geistgewirkt": "Die kanonische Geltung der Schrift als dieses unzerreissbare geistgewirkte Ganze." (*Pastoralblaetter*, 1939, p. 233.) — The moderns certainly refuse to be known as atomistic verbalists; they are for the organic whole; they disdain the bondage of the letter.

There is a reason for that. They are convinced that the Bible teems with mistakes and ethical crudities and monstrosities. These

281) See also statements quoted above. H. E. Fosdick: No piecemeal treatment of the Scriptures, no Athanasian proof-texting, but "the whole book seen as a unified development." E. E. Flack: No stringing together of proof texts, but "the analogy of Scripture, the whole Scripture." The Eisenach Convention: Bound to Scripture as a whole, but free to reject particular statements! *The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1935, p. 260: "Seekers for authority in Scripture cannot find it in isolated portions and texts of the Bible. . . . The Bible, the whole Bible, not an isolated portion of it but its whole content revealing the will of God."

blemishes must be taken care of, and the *Schriftganze* theory admirably serves that purpose. The blemishes are there, but since only the totality of Scripture counts, no one need bother about these little details. See Gibson's statement just quoted. See what use H. L. Willett makes of this theory: "No error has ever resulted in greater discredit to the Scriptures than that of attributing to the Bible such a miraculous origin and nature as to make it an infallible standard of morals and religion. That it contains the Word of God in a sense in which that expression can be used of no other book is true. But its finality and authority do not reside in *all of its utterances*, but in those great characters and messages which are easily discerned as the mountain peaks of its contents. . . . So difficult are the narratives of the demons sent into the swine and the cursed fig tree that many who hold without hesitation to the inspiration and authority of the Book wonder if there has not been some error in the record at these points. This makes it evident that the authority which we recognize as truly present in the Biblical record does not inhere in the Book as such, nor in any particular portion of it. But rather it is found in the appeal which the *Scripture as a whole* makes to the moral sense within humanity. . . . One may apply to the *Scripture as a whole* the words of the Master: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away.'" (*The Bible Through the Centuries*, p. 288 ff.) That was Hofmann's idea. As W. Rohnert puts it: "According to Hofmann the Bible contains, in individual portions, all kinds of errors, which are, however, rendered innocuous by the influence of the Bible itself. Hofmann declares: 'Die Verkuendigung keines einzelnen Apostels ist schlechthin irrtumslos, da vielmehr die Schilderung des Bildes Christi hinter der ganzen vollen Herrlichkeit des Bildes zurueckbleibt; aber die *Gesamtverkuendigung* der Apostel enthaelt vollstaendig die Bedingungen eines schlechthin irrtumslosen Verstaendnisses Christi.'" (*Die Dogmatik der ev.-luth. Kirche*, p. 105.)²⁸² — Now we understand why the moderns have no use for

282) A few more citations to show with what relief the moderns hail the Schleiermacher-Hofmann theory. F. Baumgaertel: "The letter (*Wortlaut*) of Scripture we consider of secondary importance. . . . The outstanding features, the *whole*, is what counts, not the details, which are in many instances erroneous and objectionable." (See Moeller, *Um die Inspiration der Bible*, p. 57.) Pfarrer Hoff: "Wir unterscheiden bei aller Ehrfurcht vor der Autoritaet der Heiligen Schrift als Ganzes das, was goettlich darinnen ist, von dem, was menschlich, allzu menschlich, was juedisch ist. . . . Das unterscheidet uns von der starren Orthodoxie, dass wir die sogenannte Verbalinspiration ablehnen. . . . Freilich, alles das fuehrt und muss fuehren auf Christus als vollkommene und hoechste Offenbarung Gottes." (See *Conc. Theol. Mthly*, V, p. 407.) Dr. G. Drach: "The human words of the Word of God are subject to . . . discrepancies of record, because the human authors were sinful human beings. . . .

the atomistic proof-text method of the fathers. The fathers did not find any errors in the Bible. The moderns encounter errors on nearly every page and, naturally, fight shy of individual passages. But Scripture as a whole is God's inspired Word, and their conscience is at ease. Walther described the situation exactly when he said at a meeting of the Synodical Conference: "Sie sagen ausdruecklich: Man darf nicht sagen: 'Der Spruch ist Gottes Wort. Nein, das Ganze ist Gottes Wort, als Ganzes genommen ist es Gottes Wort!' Unter dem Schriftganzen aber verstehen sie das, was sie aus der Schrift mit Weglassen dessen, was sie als irrig und fehlerhaft ansehen, herauskonstruiert haben." (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1911, p. 151.)

"Scripture as a whole" accomplishes great things for the moderns. It is the great corrective of the tainted portions of Scripture. It enables the moderns to give these inconvenient passages a proper form and makes it appear that such a treatment is proper and legitimate. Do you not see, said Professor Volck, that the words "There is no God" assume an altogether different meaning when the context is observed? Well, take every passage in its broader context, place it in the focus of the *Schriftganze*, and you will see whether it is true or how much of it, if anything, can retain its literal meaning. Under this treatment many a passage receives its *coup de grace*. We heard R. F. Horton: "The Revelation of God as a whole, the Revelation in its crowned completeness, must be used as a criterion for determining the value of individual passages in Scripture; it can never be admitted that a single passage, or even a small group of passages, teaching a special doctrine, *may override the truth* in its entirety when its full development is reached." (*Op. cit.*, p. 338.) If a particular passage is in conflict with the *Schriftganze*, it must go. Or it must be put in proper shape — which means the painless administering of the *coup de grace* — the literal meaning must be changed into a deeper meaning. That is how Fosdick and Willett want the proof texts treated which according to their literal meaning teach the old Christian doctrines; translate the old thought forms into modern categories. Hofmann got rid of the plaguing passages in the same way.²⁸³ Why, any possible teaching may be constructed by means of this organic whole of Scripture. For instance, Scripture in

We repudiate the absolute infallibility of the Apostles. . . . The Bible, then, is the Word of God not because of any theoretical explanation of divine inspiration but because *as one connected, harmonious, authentic recorded whole*, from beginning to end, the Sacred Scriptures are 'they which testify of Christ.' (The Luth. Church Quart., 1936, p. 246 ff.)

283) "In the case of Hofmann, too, the result [of operating with the "organic whole of Scripture"] was that he denied such fundamental doctrines as the inspiration of Scripture, the *satisfactio vicaria*, original sin, etc." (Pieper, *op. cit.*, I, p. 440.)

itself contains not one word on "conversion in Hades." L. Dahle readily admits that. However, if we "go back to the fundamental principles of Scriptural teaching," we are forced to come to such a conclusion. (See *Theol. Quart.*, 1908, p. 25.) — Proof texts *him*, proof texts *her* — what counts is Scripture as a whole.

Let Dr. H. Martensen conclude this section. "The use of the Scriptures in dogmatics must not consist in a mere appeal to single passages, or in a comparison of single passages; this mode of procedure too often betrays *the narrow-minded view that nothing is true which cannot be proved to be literally found in the Bible*. We agree rather on this point with Schleiermacher when he says that in our Biblical studies there should be constantly developed *a more comprehensive use of the Scriptures, in which stress shall not be laid on single passages taken apart from the context, but in which attention is paid only to the longer and specially fruitful sections, in order thus to penetrate the course of thought of the sacred writers, and find there the same combinations as those on which the results of dogmatic study themselves rest*." (*Christian Dogmatics*, p. 53.)

This, then, is the fifth objection: the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration is wrong because it results in an atomistic use of Scripture, permits and calls for the use of the proof-text methods, and will not permit science or the *Schriftganze*, etc., to change the literal meaning of individual passages.²⁸⁴ What is to be said of this objection? Three things are wrong with it.

284) Recall how *The Luth. Church Quart.* in the first quotation submitted in the present article links the two statements that verbal inspiration is not taught in some of the U. L. C. seminaries and that the employment of the proof-text method indicates an atomistic conception of the Scriptures. Recall Gibson's statement that those who use proof texts do so because they hold that it is really God, not men, who wrote these words. Read the review of Dr. M. Graebner's *The Lord's Prayer and the Christian Life in The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1938, p. 224: "While the clarity and tone of writing are beyond criticism, one may question the adequacy of some of the demonstrations offered. The Bible is used as a source of proof in quite a literal sense. 'The Word of God came to prophets, evangelists, and apostles of old in the form of direct revelation from God on high. God spoke to them directly and gave them messages to transmit. . . .' (The person who prays the Lord's Prayer sincerely, thoughtfully, and devoutly) will read the Bible with the determination of learning what God desires to teach him, and not with the idea of comparing God's Word with the so-called results of historical criticism or of scientific investigation." The latest pronouncement of *The Luth. Church Quart.* (April, 1942, p. 154) on this point: "The first of these two conceptions (of inspiration defined at Omaha in the discussion of the Pittsburgh Agreement) has to do chiefly with the composition of Scripture. The process of inspiration is so far defined that it can be given a descriptive adjective; it is *verbal inspiration*. It means that the words of Scripture stand as they are because the Holy Spirit put them there just as they are. This conception of inspiration is set forth in the *Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod*. It appeals to certain proof texts and interprets them in the light of this conception."

1) There is something wrong with the demand, basic to the whole present discussion, that the Christian doctrine must be derived not from the *sedes doctrinae*, the texts setting forth the doctrine, but from "Scripture as a whole." This demand asks us to perform an intellectual impossibility. We can understand what "the whole of Scripture" and "Scripture as a whole" means, but we cannot understand what "the whole of Scripture" as put into opposition to the component parts of Scripture means. Kliefoth's characterization of this concept has become classical. He calls it "eine unvollziehbare Phrase"—a phrase which cannot be used intelligently, an inconceivable concept.²⁸⁵ Can the whole differ from the parts? Can you make the whole, which you get by adding the component parts, change these parts into something else? Common intelligence figures that when you have learned what all the single proof texts teach concerning doctrine—or any other subject of which they treat—you know what the whole Scripture teaches. But Schleiermacher and Hofmann and the *Luth. Church Quart.* tell us that the whole of Scripture cancels what the parts of Scripture declare. "The objections to the verbal inspiration of Holy Scripture do not manifest great ingenuity or mental acumen, but the very opposite. . . . The critics of His Word lose their common sense and become utterly unreasonable and illogical." In the course of this study we have dealt with a number of cases in point. The present case seems to be the prize fauity. These men are asking us to believe that parts of Scripture are not inspired but the whole of Scripture is inspired. Hofmann tells us, keeping a sober face, that the message of not a single apostle is absolutely free of error, but their message as a whole, *die Gesamtverkuendigung*, produces an absolutely true and unerring knowledge of Christ. It passes comprehension. These men could not qualify as teachers of mathematics. They would not be permitted to teach their pupils that while the individual theorems are faulty and erroneous the science of mathematics as a whole is the absolute truth. They would not try to do that, of course, because they are convinced that the single theorems are true. But in theology, they think, a similar absurdity will pass. The whole of Scripture is trustworthy while the component parts of Scripture are faulty and untrustworthy! "There is nothing too

285) Pieper calls it a "senseless phrase. . . . Kliefoth is right, when, in his criticism of Hofmann's *Schriftbeweis*, he calls this placing of Scripture as a whole and its separate passages into opposition to one another an 'unachievable thought' ('unvollziehbare Phrase'). The fact of the matter is that we can obtain the whole of the Christian doctrine only in this way that we take the several doctrines from those passages—observing of course the context—which treat of the respective doctrines." (*Op. cit.*, p. 243.)

absurd," said H. M'Intosh, "to have been stated or imagined on this question." (*Is Christ Infallible and the Bible True?* p. 274.)²⁸⁶⁾

And remember, the impossible *Schriftganze* is the big gun in this particular assault on Verbal Inspiration. Since we dare not be atomistic, the moderns declare, but must deal with Scripture as an organic whole, Verbal Inspiration must go. But viewed closely, this mighty, high-sounding *Schriftganze* turns out to be utter nonsense. Verily, the Lord taketh the wise in their own craftiness. Aiming to be wise, they became fools.²⁸⁷⁾

286) Prof. A. Zich, in *The Northwestern Lutheran*, Nov. 10, 1935: "The editor of the *Presbyterian Tribune*, holding that the Bible contains 'inaccuracies, contradictions, outworn views, still says: 'Note also that this which we declare to be "the only infallible rule of faith and practice" is not any particular verse, sentence, or passage, nor all the verses in the Old and New Testaments, taken each by itself. It is "the Word of God" which is "the Scriptures." Clearly that means that our authority in matters of faith and practice is found in the Bible as a whole. Only as we take it all together, interpreting each particular statement in the light of its general purpose, spirit, and meaning, do we find that infallible guidance we need in order to believe and live rightly.' One might here object: How is any man to find out the 'general purpose, meaning, and spirit' of the whole if the particular 'verse, sentence, or passage' cannot be trusted because such verse, sentence, and passage may be inaccurate, self-contradictory, and outworn? If the component parts are unreliable, then how can the whole be 'infallible'? A chain is as weak as its weakest link; is it not? But we must not expect the detractors of Holy Writ to be reasonable. Very evidently the editor of the *Presbyterian Tribune* is trying hard to get away from some very clear teaching of the Bible in numerous single verses, sentences, and passages. . . ."

287) Some minor fatuities. J. Oman: "Doctrines are drawn from Holy Writ like legal decisions from the Statute Book. . . . As soon as it became 'Thus saith the Scriptures,' controversy entered the large field of differences in interpretation." (*Vision and Authority*, p. 182f.) *The Christian Century*, Feb. 10, 1937: "From Quakers to Roman Catholics, each claims to reflect the mind of Christ for his Church, and if anyone of them is right, Baptists must inevitably be wrong. Moreover, using the proof-text method, which Baptists themselves employ, each could draw a very respectable argument for its contentions from the New Testament." Distinguish between the illicit and the legitimate use of proof texts! It seems such a waste of time to call attention to this sophistry, committed also by other writers quoted above, that, because some abuse the proof-text method, the method itself is wrong. — Another sophistry is committed when these two statements are put in opposition: "The Bible is no collection of doctrinal statements" and "The Bible is a book of life." The Bible is both. — Another sophistry: Not all statements of the Bible are of the same importance, the genealogies are not so important as the Gospel. Nobody said that, and it has absolutely no bearing on the question whether every statement is authoritative. — Do not tell us that we need the whole of the Bible for the whole truth (we know that) when you propose to substitute in the next sentence for "all of the Bible" the fictitious "Scripture as a whole." — Luther helped to free us from the prison house of verbal infallibility? That is a case of ignorance. — The use of proof texts is not Lutheran but Calvinistic? Another case of ignorance. Calvin bowed to the authority of the letter, true. But so did Luther, only more so. — No; it is Catholic, says C. Stange. "Es ist eine Nachwirkung der katholischen Auffassung, wenn der Versuch gemacht wird, die einzelnen dogmatischen Aussagen aus der Schrift abzuleiten." (*Dogmatik*, I, p. 193.) We cannot go on any longer.

2) The refusal to bow to the authority of the letter and to accept every single chapter, section, verse, and sentence of the Bible as it stands — to rail at the proof-text method — is unworthy of the Christian. It does not spring from respect for Holy Scripture. Scripture asks us to treat all the words of Scripture as the very words of God (2 Tim. 3:16), precious beyond expression (Rom. 15:4). It springs from the pride of the carnal heart, which places the findings of human science above the assertions of Scripture and, in addition to that, does not like to have the theologian play the humble role of a catechumen, sitting at the foot of his teacher and simply listening to what he is told. Men do not like to take over what the apostles and prophets handed down to them and pass it on without any addition and elaboration and improvement of their own. It tickles the pride of the flesh to have something to do with constructing the saving doctrine. It makes so great an impression when the learned theologian tells his hearers that the fathers indeed knew no better than to take the doctrine from these simple proof texts, but that now men have arisen who are able to deal with the mysterious *Schriftganze* and shed new light on these old, misunderstood passages.²⁸⁸⁾ It is the pride of the flesh which is offended at Verbal Inspiration. If the doctrine of verbal inspiration be true, nothing is left for the theologian to do but to take over what he finds in Scripture and repeat it. What, cries out Sherwood Eddy, simply quote proof texts and blindly obey a mechanical, external authority? What, cries out H. W. Robinson, is the "mechanical use of a verbal oracle" our only business? J. M. Gibson knew a better way. "He began," says P. T. Forsyth, "in the old theory of inspiration, in which he would have remained had his been a metallic, inert, or mechanical mind." But he learned the secret of the *Schriftganze*! (Preface to Gibson's book, p. XIV.) This "*schlendrianmaessige Reproduktion*" of Biblical statements, says Holmstroem, does not suit the stature of the modern theologian. It is the pride of the flesh which is scandalized at the demand of Verbal Inspiration to let the text stand as it reads, and refuses to practice "atomistic verbalism." Scripture describes the man who is wise in his own conceit, who will "not consent to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ," as one who "is proud, [puffed up] knowing nothing," 1 Tim. 6:3 f.

May God give us grace to become and remain "atomistic verbalists." That is the genuine Lutheran attitude. In the con-

288) F. Buechsel: "Dies Gesamtzeugnis des Neuen Testaments zu erheben, erfordert ein betraechtliches Mass theologischer Arbeit." (*Die Offenbarung Gottes*, p. 112.) Professor Volck: "Das Befragen der Schrift ist keine so leichte Sache," particularly, of course, the investigation of "Scripture as a whole." (See Pieper, *op. cit.*, p. 398.)

troversy on the Lord's Supper Luther employed the proof-text method and said: "The text stands there too mightily." (XV:2050.) Zwingli scoffed at Luther for clinging to "fuenf arme und elende Worte," and the moderns would have told him to look beyond the proof text into the *Schriftganze*, but Luther answers: "They are revealing what kind of spirit is in them and how much they think of God's Word, ridiculing these precious words as five poor, miserable words; they do not believe that they are God's words. For if they believed that they are God's words, they would not call them miserable, poor words, but would prize one tittle and letter more highly than the whole world." (XX:1040.) Rall tells us that "Paul had not the faintest idea that centuries later theologians would be building up their theories on this phrase or that sentence in his letters" (*Op. cit.*, p. 229), but Luther thought that that exactly was Paul's idea: "It is impossible, absolutely impossible, that there is a single letter in Paul which the entire Church should not follow and observe." (XIX:20.) Surely, Luther was an atomistic verbalist: "a single letter, yea, a single tittle, of Scripture counts for more than heaven and earth. (IX:650.) Luther was a humble Christian. He was not ashamed to be a catechumen of the apostles. We are not prophets, he says, but "what we can do and will do, if we, too, are sanctified and have the Holy Spirit, is to boast of being catechumens and pupils of the prophets, who simply repeat and preach what we have heard and learned from the prophets and apostles" (III:1890), and learned it not from the *Schriftganze* but from those poor, miserable words of the proof texts: "Zum andern sollst du . . . die muendliche Rede und buchstabische Worte im Buch immer treiben und treiben" (XIV:435), stick to the words lettered in the Book. Oh, what an atomistic verbalist! "O du demuetiger Luther!" was Walther's comment on this treatise of Luther. And Luther learned his theology from the apostles. The proof-text method is genuinely apostolic. Paul would base his argument on a single word! Gal. 3:16! Christ Himself used the proof-text method. "It is written"! (Matt. 4.) "Have ye not read?" (Matt. 19:4.) Our Lord bases His argument on one single word, John 10:35, and when He adds, "The Scripture cannot be broken," He condemns the *Schriftganze* method, which breaks one Scripture, one proof text, after the other.²⁸⁹⁾ And so

289) B. B. Warfield: "What is the particular thing in Scripture for the confirmation of which the indefectible authority of Scripture is thus (John 10:34f.) invoked? It is one of its most casual clauses — more than that, the very form of its expression in one of its most casual clauses. This means, of course, that in the Savior's view the indefectible authority of Scripture attaches to the very form of expression of its most casual clauses. It belongs to Scripture through and through, down to its most minute particulars, that it is of indefectible authority."

we of the Missouri Synod and our brethren are going to retain the proof-text method. We shall keep on saying with Walther: "It is written — damit ist die Sache abgemacht." (*Walther and the Church*, p. 20.) And: "Wenn Paulus hier (2 Tim. 3:15) sagt: 'die heiligen Buchstaben', and darunter 'alles Geschriebene' im Alten Testament zusammenfasst, so soll damit recht hervorgehoben werden, dass jeder Teil, auch der geringste Teil, jeder Buchstabe so ist, wie man von dieser Schrift aussagt, heilig. Wir sollen glauben: Jeder Buchstabe ist vom Heiligen Geist." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1911, p. 154.) "The Brief Statment of the Missouri Synod appeals to certain proof texts," says the *Luth. Church Quart.*, and we thank the *Quarterly* for spreading that far and wide. Ladd ridicules Calov for saying: "It is impious and profane audacity to change a single point in the Word of God and to substitute a smooth breathing for a rough one, or a rough for a smooth" (*op. cit.*, p. 58); but Calov can appeal to Christ, as Walther in connection with the words just quoted appeals to Christ, who insists on the authority of every jot and tittle (Matt. 5:18). — If it should happen that we misapply a proof text, we are grateful to him who censures us for that. We do not want to be guilty of an "atomistic use of Scripture" in the narrow sense. But when men censure us for using the "old atomistic method of proof texts" and call us "atomistic verbalists," we consider that high praise.

3) The proposal to substitute the *Schriftganze* for the proof-text method is fraught with deadly peril. They offer us "Scripture as a whole" and take away from us the whole Scripture. First they told us that nothing is lost if only the Gospel truths in the Bible are retained. Then they said, when we began to study John 3:16: Take care — the words of John 3:16 are not inspired; you must not rely on the words, for that would be mechanical inspiration. And now they are telling us that it is futile to deal with single texts at all; that would be atomistic; John 3:16 in itself means nothing at all. There is nothing left of the Bible; doctrinal issues can no longer be settled by means of proof texts, as the *Christian Century* informed us; and when the troubled Christian takes up one of his cherished golden passages to comfort his soul, he is told that individual passages no longer count.

(*Revelation and Inspiration*, p. 86). — J. L. Neve: "It is frequently said that the Bible is not first of all a book of proof texts (*dicta probantia*) for statements of dogmatics, because it is preeminently a means of grace. There is truth in this remark, of course; but because theology deals with things pertaining to salvation, a Church with a real appreciation of the Scriptures as a means of grace will always want to have her creed, her teaching, her dogmatics, in harmony with such Scripture. Christ proved from Scripture; the New Testament writers did it; the Church of all time has done it. The practice is inseparable from Lutheranism." (*Churches and Sects of Christendom*, p. 200.)

As Volck in effect said: You must first find out what meaning this passage gets from its relation to Scripture as a whole. "Das heisst aber," says Dr. A. L. Graebner, "einem die Bibel ganz nehmen. That is taking all of the Bible from me. . . . When in my dying hour my senses weaken, the verse 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin' should be sufficient to strengthen and keep my faith. But now they tell me: No; only the organic whole can do that." (*Proc. Syn. Conf.*, 1886 p. 24.)²⁹⁰⁾

No, no, say the moderns; we have taken from you only the individual texts but have given you the Bible as a whole. — But we cannot use your *Schriftganzen*. We do not know what it is. And you do not know it. You have never told us by what exact rules you came by it. You have nowhere published a syllabus of it. The thing is too hazy for a man to deal with it. It has less substance than a dream. We try to grasp its message, and it constantly dissolves. There is no certainty of doctrine and of faith where this nebulous thing serves as basis. Says the *Australian Lutheran*: "The interpretation of Scripture operating with 'Scripture is one organic whole,' general scope of Scripture, entirety of Scripture, 'das Schriftganze,' allied with the subjective faith of the theologian as a cojudge of doctrine, sets aside the *sedes doctrinae*, the clear Scripture passages which treat of the particular doctrines, and destroys all certainty of doctrine." (See *CONC. THEOL. MTHLY*, X, p. 886.) Of course there is no certainty in the new method. E. Grubb is frank to declare: "The indiscriminate use of Scripture as a single source of equal value, as a quarry from every part of which stones may be indifferently collected to build up the temple of constructive dogmatics, will, it is hoped, soon pass away never to return. The new view does not, it may be urged, give the same certainty as the old." He continues with the cynical observation: "But if the old is becoming incredible, what then? May we not be meant to understand that the desire for infallibility is itself unhealthy?" (*Op. cit.*, p. 240.) There is no certainty about the *Schriftganze* because they have spun it out of

290) We read in *Modern Religious Liberalism*, by J. Horsch, p. 30: "The real difficulty of our time, when we come to probe it, is the dethronement of the Bible from its position of unquestioned authority. From the earliest period of Christianity, even in the writings of the earliest Fathers, the Sacred Scriptures were held to be the standard and the test of Christian truth: nothing was to be taught as essential except what was contained in them or could be proved by them; and up to the middle of the last century the imposing fortress of the Book remained practically unquestioned and certainly unbreached. A quotation from any part of it carried unquestioned weight, and decisions drawn from its decretals were the settlement of all strife. — [Liberal] Protestants have lost their Bible and, in losing it, have lost their religion. How can they shelter in a building which is demolished or which is ever hidden by the scaffolding about it, necessary for perpetual repairs?"

their own heads and because they are not yet through with this spinning operation. The Anglican Commission has told us that Scripture alone does not furnish the standard of doctrine but that this standard is being unfolded "in the experience of the Church," and R. F. Horton told us that, when revelation has reached its crowned completeness, it will serve as a criterion. "Let the devil wait for that," said Luther, "I cannot wait so long." (VIII:100.)

There is no certainty about this "Scripture as a whole." We ask the modern theologian how he knows that his *Schriftganze* — every theologian is at liberty to construct his own — is the right one, and the only answer he can give is that he feels it must be the right one. We cannot follow a leader who forsakes the well-established rules and simply follows his "intuition." We cannot follow a theological leader whose only guarantee for the truth of his teaching is his own word. Luther has warned us against these dreamers: "They speak such things only in order to lead us away from Scripture and make themselves masters over us that we should believe their *dream sermons* (Traumpredigten)" (V:334.) And they refuse to tell us just how to construct the *Schriftganze* and just what it contains. "Boake Carter is writing a book in which he will tell of a 'secret Bible.' 'Research now going on bears out my contention that there are two Bibles,' Carter said. 'There is the "revealed Bible," which is being used today. Then there is a "secret Bible" which was written in code and carefully hidden. It has remained secret until this day.' Carter said the 'secret Bible' contains divinely inspired rules for all human conduct. . . ." (See *The Lutheran*, Nov. 4, 1941.) We are not going to base our hope of salvation on Boake Carter's "secret Bible." And we are not going to base our doctrine and faith on the mysterious *Schriftganze*.

Will you base your faith and hope of salvation on the conceit of some theologian? Just that is what they are offering you under the name of the *Schriftganze*. Luther's words, addressed to the *Schwaermer* of his day, fit the *Schwaermerei* under discussion exactly. "Grund und Ursache solches ihres Duenkels ist erstlich, dass man diese Worte 'Das ist mein Leib' [or any other proof text] muesse aus den Augen tun und zuvor durch den Geist die Sachen bedenken. . . . Da hast du eine gewisse Regel, die dich besser leitet in alle Wahrheit, denn der Heilige Geist selber tun kann, naemlich, wo die Heilige Schrift deinen Duenkel irret oder hindert, da tue sie aus den Augen und folge zuerst deinem Duenkel [conceit], so triffst du den rechten Weg gewiss allerdinge fein." (XX: 1022.) You may be sure that those who substitute "Scripture as a whole" for the individual statements of Scripture are not pleased with these individual statements, else they would not tell us to do

away with them. And you may be sure that what they are offering us instead is not God's Word and revelation; else God would Himself have set it down in His Book. (The moderns surely are not going to tell us that they are receiving special revelations from heaven!) And since it is not God's Word, it is their own word, their own product, the product of their conceit. Dr. Pieper: "The 'whole of Scripture' or the 'whole of the Christian doctrine' which is constructed without considering the individual passages that treat of the doctrine is purely *man's own product*." (*Op. cit.*, I, p. 244.) Pieper continues: "This inconceivable concept — the whole of Scripture — as opposed to the individual statements is made use of to *put Scripture out of action* in the name of Scripture." Again: "This pretended 'Scripture as a whole' is made to serve as a check on the individual statements for the purpose of putting the quietus on Scripture itself. . . . He who obtains the 'whole' in any other way than through the parts, is fabricating his own Scripture; he is no longer a pupil but a critic of the word of Scripture." (II, p. 131.) The proposal to replace the individual statements of Scripture with "the whole of Scripture" is fraught with deadly peril. He who accepts the proposal is losing all of Scripture and getting in exchange fallible human opinions. True, this mysterious "whole of Scripture" as handled by some theologians leaves some Biblical doctrines intact. But in that case the "whole of Scripture" is guaranteed to give a greater assurance of the truth of the doctrine. And so the Christians are asked, in every case, to trust for their salvation in the vaporings of some poor little human being. The Christians are being solicited to trade in all of their good Bible for a counterfeit "whole."²⁹¹

291) A similar imposition is practiced when the Christians are told to apply the spurious "analogy of faith" to individual passages of Scripture in order to get their "real" sense, a sense different from the literal sense. Recall the statement of Dr. E. E. Flack: "No fundamental doctrine rests on a single isolated passage. . . . It requires the analogy of Scripture, the whole Scripture, . . . to establish the truth as it is in Christ Jesus." The classical statement on this point is: "The Christian doctrines form for the believer, especially for the theologian, a recognizable, harmonious whole or system, which is constructed out of the perfectly clear passages of Holy Writ. This organic whole is the highest norm for the interpretation of Scripture, more important than parallelism, the comparison of the various passages which treat of a certain doctrine; in other words, it forms the analogy of faith." A full discussion of this analogy-of-faith canon is found in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1904, p. 406 ff. The same matter is treated in the article "Schriftauslegung und Analogie des Glaubens," *Lehre und Wehre*, 1907, p. 11 ff. It will be noticed that this "analogy of faith" is practically the same as the *Schriftganze*, and instead of "a similar imposition" we might have used the term "the same imposition." It has the same disastrous effect: it cancels any clear passage of Scripture which is declared to be out of harmony with the "harmonious whole" which the theologian has constructed. There is an "analogy of faith." Luther and the fathers "understand by analogy of

We shall not do it. We do not want the counterfeit "whole" because we have the real whole of Scripture. There is nothing atomistic about our treatment of Scripture. To us it is an unbreakable, indivisible whole. "Not only are the various writings, when considered separately, worthy of God, but they together exhibit one complete and harmonious whole, unimpaired by excess

faith the clear Scripture passages that need no explanation but shine in their own light. These passages together are the 'analogy' or the 'rule of faith.' See *Apology, Trigl.*, 441, 60." (Pieper, I, p. 437.) "These clear passages are the rule, according to which every faithful teacher must explain dark passages as far as this is possible." (*Loc. cit.*) Operating, however, with the spurious "analogy of faith," theologians claim the right to divest a clear passage of its clear meaning in order to bring it into harmony with some other passage. That is not permissible. Christian theology does not engage in the business of harmonizing. Any teaching, clearly revealed, must stand, even though it seem out of harmony with another teaching, also clearly revealed. The harmonizers, however, feel justified to change any clear teaching, the meaning of any clear passage, in order to establish "a harmonious whole," to save their spurious "analogy of faith." To illustrate. At the time of the controversy on Conversion and Election these statements were made: "This universal comfort of the Gospel can only be preserved if the few texts of Holy Writ, in part not easily understood, which treat of the selection of a few persons, who will unfailingly be saved, are *not interpreted in such a way* that the many clear texts of the universal grace of God towards all men are darkened or suppressed, but if, on the contrary, the few *dark passages* are interpreted by means of the many clear passages." (Our italics.) Again: "The author [of a certain book] says it is vain and foolish to deny election because we cannot harmonize it with the teaching that God loves all men. Our reply is this: If a doctrine *cannot be harmonized* with John 3:16, it must be contrary to the Word of God and should therefore be dropped." There are many clear passages which teach particular election, the election of grace. But in order to harmonize them with other clear passages which teach universal grace, the analogy-of-faith theologians simply stamp the first group of passages "dark passages" and change their meaning. Walther certainly was right in saying: "To correct one doctrine of Scripture by another because reason insists that this passage is obscure and involves a contradiction, to correct it, yes, delete it entirely, on the plea that dark passages must receive their interpretation through the clear passages — dieses ist ein entsetzlicher Frevel." (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1891, p. 68.) Luther: "To interpret *clear and certain* passages by means of other passages is making sport of the truth and hiding the light behind clouds. Do you say that all passages must be interpreted by means of other passages? That would be turning Scripture into an endless, rude chaos." (XX:327.) Dr. Pieper's characterization of the spurious "analogy of faith": "Unter 'dem Ganzen der Schrift' versteht man nicht die Schrift selbst, sondern die *menschlich gereimte* Schrift, die Schrift, insofern sie von Menschen, insonderheit von den klugen Theologen, so *zurecht-geschnitten* ist, dass sie mit den *menschlichen* Gedanken von dem Zusammenhang der einzelnen Lehren sich reimt, ein dem Menschen 'erkennbares' harmonisches Ganzes bildet. Das 'Ganze der Schrift,' das diese Leute im Sinne haben, ist ein *menschliches Machwerk*. Und wenn sie nun nach diesem *ihrem* 'Ganzen' die Schrift auslegen, so moegen sie noch so oft versichern, dass sie Schrift *durch Schrift* erklaren: tatsaechlich wandeln sie genau in den Wegen der Papisten, Schwaermer und Rationalisten; sie legen die Schrift *nach ihren eigenen Gedanken* aus. Ihre 'Analogie des Glaubens' ist die Analogie des *menschlichen Ich*." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1907, p. 13.)

or defect." (Bengel.) One whole, written by one Author, every word God's word. Ask Dr. C. C. Hein what the whole of Scripture means, and he answers: "To the Lutheran Church the Bible as a whole as well as in all its parts is the pure infallible Word of God. . . . May Lutheranism preserve to the Christian world its own precious Reformation heritage: the Word of God, the whole Word of God and nothing but the Word of God." (*The Second Luth. World Convention*, p. 74 f.) Ask Luther and he answers: "The entire Holy Scriptures are ascribed to the Holy Ghost." (III: 1889.) And the Holy Ghost in Scripture assures us: From Gen. 1:1 to Rev. 22:21 it is My Book, every word My word. We do not treat the Bible atomistically. We do not make of it a chaotic medley, parts contributed by the Holy Spirit, parts by this and that fallible human writer. We leave that to the moderns. Rudelbach tells them to reserve the term "atomistic" for themselves: "Auf Semler fussen wesentlich alle diejenigen unter den Neueren, die die Inspiration der Schrift als eine teilbare Groesse behandeln, nur dass sie, als Bemerkungs-Rhapsoden, noch atomistischer sind." (*Zeitschr. f. d. Gesamte Luth. Theol. u. Kirche*, 1842, zweites Quartalh., p. 10.) Not we but they tear Holy Scripture piecemeal. We treat it as a unity — and we treat it as an organic unity, one organic, harmonious whole. "Scripture," says Luther, and say we, "forms a harmonious whole and all examples and histories, yea, the entire Scripture in all its parts, aims at this, that one should learn Christ." (III: 18.) We know that every book, every chapter, every verse, is integrated in this wonderful organism. We may not, in many cases, see the relation. We poor sinners know only in part. But we know that not a single member of this organism is useless or harmful. The poor, supercilious *Schriftganze*-theologians imagine that they know better than the Holy Ghost how to construct a harmonious whole, lay their unholy hands upon the sacred Book, and turn it over to the Church as a disfigured, mangled body. Blessed is he who receives Scripture as God gave it, and retains every verse and every statement in its literal sense. "We must have the whole Christ of the whole Bible if we want to have a whole salvation." (L. Keyser.) As you value your spiritual health, let Scripture stand as it is, with every part of it working towards that one end — the soul's salvation. "Darum heisst's: rund und rein, ganz und alles geglaubt oder nichts geglaubt. Der Heilige Geist laesst sich nicht trennen noch teilen, dass er ein Stueck sollte wahrhaftig und das andere falsch lehren oder glauben lassen." (Luther, XX: 1781.)

(To be continued)

TH. ENGELDER

Corrigendum: In the July number, page 503, twentieth line from top, read "dynamical" for "dictation."

Leading Thoughts on Eschatology in the Epistles to the Thessalonians

VI

In our discussions of the leading eschatological thoughts in the Epistles to the Thessalonians we now proceed to a new section. In the previous installments we have noted that the Lord will return suddenly, as a thief in the night, 1 Thess. 5:1-3; that He will not return before the great Antichrist will have been revealed, 2 Thess. 2:1-13. But the apostle also shows the purpose for which the Lord will return, namely, for vengeance upon the unbelievers and for the glorification of the believers. This truth is stressed particularly in the section 2 Thess. 1:3-12, to which we now turn for further study. This passage, moreover, constitutes one of the great eschatological pericopes of the traditional Church Year, the Epistle for the 26th Sunday after Trinity.

"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." V. 3. Paul begins his Second Epistle with an expression of thanks, as is his custom in all of his letters addressed to congregations, with the sole exception of the Epistle to the Galatians. Ordinarily he says merely, "I give thanks," or "We give thanks." Cp. 1 Thess. 1:2; 1 Cor. 1:4; here, however, he emphasizes that he is "bound to thank God." This obligation rests upon him in view of the wholesome conditions prevailing in the congregation which he portrays in the verses following. God's grace had accomplished great things in that congregation. The plural in "We are bound," *οφείλομεν*, is not the *pluralis auctoris*, but Paul always has in mind, as in the First Epistle, his helpers Silvanus and Timothy, v. 1. Cp. 1 Thess. 1:2; 2:18; 4:8. With this frank acknowledgment of the wholesome conditions in the congregation Paul is sure to make the heart of his readers more willing to accept his exhortations. He expresses his joy over them and his love toward them by the loving term *brethren*. But he does not thank the Thessalonians, for they are not entitled to his thanks; he thanks God on their account. God alone is the originator of the good which Paul lauds in the Thessalonians. And God the Father is meant specifically in these and similar expressions of thanks. Cp. Col. 1:3; Eph. 1:3. Such deserved thanks for his Christians Paul "always" brings to his God. This "always" must not be weakened into a mere "often," for Paul is actually occupied therewith without ceasing, 1 Thess. 1:2, even as he admonishes all Christians to pray without ceasing, 1 Thess. 5:17. He gives expression to his gratitude in spite of the fact that

later in the Epistle he may be compelled to criticize and rebuke his readers, as is the case in chapters 2 and 3 of the Second Epistle, in chap. 1:2-10 of the First Epistle, and in his Epistles to the Corinthians, whom he had to rebuke severely and at great length, 1 Cor. 1:4-9. Let this serve as a model for all preachers: They should acknowledge the good that is to be found in their congregations, despite the deficiencies and the shortcomings in the congregation as a whole and in individual cases.

Paul proceeds: "As it is meet," as is right and proper, namely, that we give thanks for your sake. This is not a superfluous addition to "we are bound." "We are bound" emphasizes the duty to give thanks, subjectively considered; from within, Paul feels the duty to give thanks; however, the clause "as it is meet" emphasizes the duty to give thanks, objectively considered. It is required by the circumstances to give thanks for such manifestation of grace. In the following sentence the cause of the thanks expressed is stated; Paul gives thanks because their faith grows and their love increases. He had praised their faith and love also in the First Epistle, chap. 1:3; but here he not only says that their faith is great and on the increase, but that it "groweth exceedingly." Ὑπερᾶνειν is a *hapax legomenon*. Paul frequently uses compounds with ὑπέρ for the purpose of intensifying the idea. Ἀὐξάνειν is used both transitively and intransitively, the compound only in the latter sense. Paul does not only say that their love is great but that it is constantly increasing, πλεονάζει, it grows greater from day to day. His wishes and admonitions in the First Epistle have been gloriously fulfilled, chap. 3:2; 4:10. In spite of suffering, their faith and love, which Timothy had praised, 1 Thess. 3:6, had grown stronger. It should be noted that he does not say "your charity," but "the charity of everyone of you all." Thus the praise he accords them is emphasized. The growth in charity is in evidence not only in the congregation as a whole, but in every individual member. To "charity" Paul adds the modifier "toward each other." That refers to their fellow Christians in Thessalonica. He is speaking of the brotherly love of Christians. In 1 Thess. 1:3 Paul had named a third virtue, "patience of hope." He now refers to this same virtue in a somewhat different form.

"So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure." V. 4. This sentence is connected with the preceding one by means of ὥστε. According to Greek grammar ὥστε with the Indicative indicates actual result, with the Infinitive, hypothetical result. However, even in classical Greek perhaps more exceptions to this rule than agreements with it are to be found; in the New Testament the Infinitive is used promiscuously to denote

either actual or hypothetical result. The growth of the Thessalonians in their Christianity causes the apostle and his co-workers to rejoice to such an extent that they not only thank God but also speak of it before men. They cannot help themselves, they do so spontaneously without being urged to do so, αὐτοὺς ἡμᾶς. According to the best text the form ἐνκαυχᾶσθαι is used, which is stronger than the simple καυχᾶσθαι, and with ἐν ὑμῖν the object of glorying is indicated: "we ourselves glory in you," for ἐνκαυχᾶσθαι is construed with ἐν and really means to place one's glory in something, to glory concerning some matter. Cp. 1 Cor. 1:31; 3:21. At first glance these passages in his Epistles to the Corinthians seem to conflict with what Paul writes here. Yet he does not glory in what the Thessalonians have accomplished as human beings, but he praises the work of God in them, as v. 3 clearly shows. Cp. 1 Thess. 2:19, 20. And he glories in the Thessalonians "in the churches of God." He has in mind the congregations in Achaia, among whom he was laboring at the time, Corinth and its sister congregations. Cp. the introductory questions and Rom. 16:1. For that reason he also uses the plural. In the words which follow he indicates in greater detail the object of his glorying: he glories in the Thessalonians because of their patience and their faith. Both are intimately connected, as is indicated by the fact that only one article is used. "Patience," ὑπομονή, is placed first, because it is especially worthy of praise that the Thessalonians remained firm not only in one assault but persevered patiently in spite of repeated attacks. The ultimate root of their patience is faith, and πίστις is to be understood here as certainty, firm conviction, courageous assurance. They look upon their tribulations not as an excessive burden, they endure it patiently. Nor do they waver in their faith. In spite of all trials their confidence and trust in their God and Savior remains unmoved. And this courageous loyal faith the apostle holds up as a praiseworthy example to those congregations who have not yet been confronted with such trials and difficulties. The patience of the Thessalonians was not a stoical indifference, an apathetical submission to what could not change, but the joyful and firm conviction that God would finally come to their rescue. Cp. Rev. 13:10 on the expression used here: "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints"; on the subject matter cp. 1 Pet. 1:6-9. This patience and this faith they exhibited in all of their "persecutions and tribulations." The two expressions have slightly different meanings: θλίψις is more general; tribulation, distress. The word emphasizes that the suffering is painful and distressing. Διωγμός on the other hand is more specific; it designates the immediate hostility on the part of the adversaries, persecution. In αἷς we have the well-known Greek attraction in place of αἶς

(or ὄν, since in the New Testament ἀνέχεσθαι is used only with the Genitive; the Accusative is used only in classical Greek; and the present tense shows that the persecutions against the Thessalonians were still going on at that time. They must have broken out afresh, for in the First Epistle they are described as having ceased. Cp. chap. 2:14, where the Aorist is used.

"Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer." V. 5. In this verse Paul passes judgment on the stand of his readers portrayed in v. 4. Their patience in tribulations is unto them a seal of their future glory. The first sentence is appositional, in the Nominative, and the subject to which this apposition refers is the preceding statement regarding the persecutions and tribulations "that ye endure." The thought is: That you endure all persecutions and tribulations patiently and in faith is an indication of the righteous judgment of God. By the "righteous judgment of God" the future judgment at the return of Christ is evidently meant, not a present judgment, as some interpreters assume. That is proved first by the use of the definite article, which points to the well-known judgment which is in a class by itself; and secondly by the context, vv. 6-10. That was also Luther's interpretation: "Welches anzeigt, dasz Gott recht richten wird." The great world judgment is meant. But what does the apostle mean to say? In what respect is patience in tribulations an indication, a proof, of the coming righteous judgment of God? The line of thought is this: If believers for the sake of their faith endure the persecution of the unbelievers, it will appear evident that God will be a righteous judge. He does not want the distinction between faith and unbelief to become doubtful. For He permits, on the one hand, the unbelievers to inflict tribulation upon the believers, thus indicating the glaring difference between the two; and, on the other hand, He gives to His believers an opportunity to prove by patient endurance of their afflictions that a remarkable change has occurred in them when they became Christians, that they really love the Word and the kingdom of God. Both the hatred of the unbelievers and the patience of the believers will call for a final judgment, when faith as well as unbelief will be duly recompensed. That this is the connection is shown by the purpose clause which follows; likewise by vv. 6 and 7. Cp. also Phil. 1:28, where we find the closely related term ἐνδοξίς; cp. also Luke 16:25.

The infinitive clause introduced by εἰς states the outcome of the "righteous judgment of God," its result as far as the believers are concerned; that they "may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God." All believers, having patiently endured persecutions and

tribulations, shall be counted worthy, judged, declared worthy of the kingdom of God; they shall obtain this kingdom, which is not only the object of their longing desire,* but for which they also suffer, as Paul adds. Their willing suffering of tribulation proves the sincerity of their love of Christ and the fervor of their desire to be and remain partakers of His kingdom. The term "kingdom of God" invariably denotes that kingdom which God has established on earth through Christ and which will find its glorious consummation on the Last Day. 1 Thess. 2:12. Paul does not attribute to the sufferings of the Christians any meritorious value. No one can earn the kingdom of God either by works or by sufferings. The preposition "for," *ὑπέρ*, merely designates the object "over" which, in reference, in loving relationship to which, they suffer, 1 Thess. 2:1. It is God's will to lead all who suffer for the sake of His Word and kingdom to eternal glory. That is to be His gracious reward for their patience in tribulation, and therefore they are to glory in their tribulations. Acts 14:22; Rom. 5:3-5; 8:17, 18; 2 Cor. 4:17, 18; 2 Tim. 2:22. The righteousness of God will exalt the patient believers so that they are citizens in His kingdom. What a powerful comfort for the Thessalonians and at the same time an urgent exhortation to continue in patient endurance!

"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you." V. 6. This verse and the subsequent verses prove the statement of v. 5 that the readers suffering for the kingdom of God shall be counted worthy of it and shall possess and enjoy it. The apostle speaks hypothetically, *εἴτε*, provided, if so be that, if indeed, not in order to express any doubt, but to make his statement the more positive. Cp. on this use of *εἴτε* Rom. 8:9, 17. The conclusion is irrefutable, being founded on the very nature of God. It is impossible that the righteous God should not judge between those that trouble the Thessalonians and those who are being troubled. He must effect a change whereby the troublers become the troubled and those troubled obtain rest. The expression "seeing it is a righteous thing" points back to the "righteous judgment" v. 5. Paul stresses the stern justice of God which deals with man according to the law of retribution (*ius talionis*). Cp. Rom. 2:1-10; 2 Cor. 5:10; Eph. 6:8, 9; Col. 3:24. The preposition *παρά* implies a local reference to God's judgment throne: with God, before God the Judge. Cp. Rom. 2:13; Gal. 3:11. God's righteousness makes it imperative that He "recompense tribulation to them that trouble you." *Recompense*, *ἀνταποδοῦναι* denotes here the punitive retribution; in 1 Thess. 3:9 it is used of rendering thanks for God's blessing. With what measure they mete, it shall be measured to them again.

Matt. 7:2. In close connection with this statement the other side is brought out in the next verse.

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels." V. 7. According to His righteousness God will "recompense tribulation to them that trouble you." This same righteousness moves Him to give rest to the troubled Thessalonians. "Recompense" is to be supplied from v. 6. Ἀνεσις, literally the relaxing of what had been tense, e. g., a bow, is metaphorically used in the sense of refreshment, relief, rest, in contrast to trouble. Cp. 2 Cor. 7:5; 8:13; it is a synonym of ἀνάψυξις, refreshing. Acts 3:19. The term describes the glory of God's kingdom negatively considered as a deliverance from tribulation and persecution, a release from sorrow and pain, rest for the weary after the restlessness of this life. Paul could hardly have chosen a more suitable term in addressing the persecuted and suffering Thessalonians. It promised to them a complete reversal of their present condition. Cp. Luke 16:25; Heb. 4:9; Rev. 14:13; 21:4. The positive side of the heavenly glory is described vv. 10 and 12.

God will give this rest to the Thessalonians "with us." Paul includes himself and his co-workers Silvanus and Timothy with the troubled and persecuted longing for rest; cp. 3:2; 1 Thess. 2:2; Acts 17:5-9. This twofold recompense for troublers and troubled will take place "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed." That is the occasion for which Paul in the letters to the Thessalonians usually employs the term παρουσία, presence, arrival, advent; so chap. 2:1; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15. Here he uses another word, ἀποκάλυψις, revelation, as in 1 Cor. 1:7, a more definite and more vivid term. Christ, who had remained hidden from the sight of man, whose presence with His Church had been an invisible one, Matt. 28:20, will then manifest himself as Ruler and Judge of the world by appearing as such visibly and publicly. Col. 3:1-4. Another expression for this manifestation of Christ's glory is "the brightness of His coming," 2:8, the epiphany of His parousia, which designates particularly the glory and magnificence after the preceding concealment. Cp. also Titus 2:13.

The revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus shall take place "from heaven with His mighty angels." These two modal prepositional phrases define the manner of His coming. He comes from heaven, where now He sits on the right hand of the majesty on high, where He rules and intercedes for His own. Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 1:3. On yonder Day he shall descend visibly from heaven to raise the dead, to judge mankind, to conduct His own into everlasting glory, Cp. 1 Thess. 4:14-17.

He will come with His mighty angels, the angels of His power; that vast host of heavenly spirits enhancing the glory of His coming, 1 Thess. 3:13; Matt. 16:27; 25:31; Rev. 19:14; Mark 8:38. They are called angels of His power because through them His divine power is manifested, they carry out His orders, His word of power. As they assisted in the giving of the Law, Heb. 2:2, Gal. 3:19, so they shall assist Christ on the great Day of Resurrection. Cp. Matt. 13:41; 24:31; 1 Thess. 4:16.

"In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." V. 8. The first prepositional phrase still describes the manner of the revelation of the Lord Jesus. He shall reveal Himself in a flame of fire, a fiery flame. This expression stresses in still greater measure the glory and majesty of Christ's Advent. He comes not in dim, shadowy twilight. He appears in radiant glory of fiery splendor, in a veritable sea of flames. In the Old Testament, fire is the symbol of God's appearance and proximity; particularly God's coming to judgment is pictured as a coming in fire. Gen. 15:17; Ex. 3:2; 13:21, 22; 19:18; Ps. 97:3; Is. 29:6; 30:30; Dan. 7:9, 10. This symbolic language is here applied to Christ's Advent; cp. 1 Cor. 3:13; Heb. 10:27; 12:29. The participial clause immediately following is not to be connected with "flaming fire," but with "our Lord Jesus Christ," v. 7, "taking vengeance," when He takes vengeance. The Greek phrase διδόναι ἐκδίκησιν, occurs only here in the New Testament, but it is found in the Septuagint, Ezek. 25:14; cp. Luke 18:7. The vengeance He metes out is a just one, the punishment He inflicts, well deserved. He is a righteous Judge, whose judgments cannot but be righteous, vv. 5, 6.

Christ will take vengeance "on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." The repetition of the article before both terms indicates that St. Paul has in mind two classes of such as shall be punished. The two expressions therefore do not simply describe unbelievers in general. The one class consists of such as "know not God," the heathen, whom Paul describes elsewhere by the same term, Cp. 1 Thess. 1:9; 4:5; Gal. 4:8; Eph. 2:12. While the heathen know that there is a god, a creator and preserver of the universe, Rom. 1:19-21, they do not know the one, true, living God. That is not an excusable lack of knowledge; that is a serious fault, damnable guilt. Instead of seeking God, Acts 17:27, they harden their hearts and refuse to obey God, Rom. 1:18, 28.

The second class are such as "obey not the Gospel," etc. That refers to the Jews who knew the true God but obeyed neither this God nor His Gospel. Cp. Rom. 10:3, 16, 21. Their unbelief

constitutes a still greater guilt. Salvation is offered to them, but they reject it and go so far as to persecute them who bring them the Gospel. We see that Paul divides "them that trouble" the Thessalonians, v. 6, into two classes in exact keeping with his statement that Jews and Gentiles actually afflicted the Christians at Thessalonica, 1 Thess. 2:14-16. In a striking manner Paul explicitly states that they obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, although he had named the Lord Jesus only a moment before, v. 7. He does this in order to distinguish between the two classes, the heathen knowing not Jesus, but only a god, and chiefly in order to point out the greater guilt of the Jews. In rejecting the Gospel the Jews reject their own Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One, for whom the Old Testament believers had been so anxiously looking. They reject their Lord Jehovah, who has a right to demand faith and obedience and has threatened His wrath to all that disobey Him. They reject Jesus, their Savior, the only One that can deliver them from sin and from the wrath to come. An enormous, ominous, fatal guilt: to obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the latter expression cp. Acts 6:7; Rom. 1:5.

"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." V. 9. Paul names the penalty which will be meted out to the unbelievers, be they Jews or Gentiles, "everlasting destruction." The pronoun *who*, such as, οἱ αὐτοί, *quippe qui*, refers to the two classes named in v. 8 and at the same time indicates the reason for their punishment, being of such a nature as described in v. 8. The Greek expression rendered "shall be punished," δίκην τίσσειν, occurs only here in the New Testament. Τίθειν means pay, recompense; δίκη denotes a judicial decision, the execution of the sentence, punishment. The penalty they will have to pay is added in the form of an apposition, everlasting destruction. Ὁλεθρος denotes ruin, destruction, death, and is modified by αἰώνιος, eternal, everlasting, enduring throughout the ages. Terrible words, indeed, announcing a horrible fate. Αἰώνιος designates not only a long time, which after all is limited, but unlimited, endless duration. The word occurs in a threefold sense: 1) without beginning and without end; so used of God, Rom. 16:26; Heb. 9:14; 2) without beginning, Rom. 16:25; 3) without end; 2 Cor. 4:18 (note the contrast "temporal"); 2 Pet. 1:11; Heb. 9:15, etc. The latter meaning is the only possible one here. Cp. the parallel Matt. 25:41, 46, where αἰώνιος is used to designate the duration of both life and punishment.

The term "from the presence" has had many conflicting interpretations. Many commentators take ἀπό in the sense of "away from," denoting separation, severance. The wicked are to be

separated from the presence or face of the Lord. In this sense the word is undoubtedly used chap. 2:2; Gal. 5:4; Rom. 9:3. This interpretation is also possible, since eternal destruction consists in separation from God and the beatific vision of His countenance. The context, however, decides against this explanation. It does not at all suit the phrase immediately following, "and from the glory of His power." Moreover, the context emphasizes not the negative side of the destruction, the lack of happiness, but the positive side, destruction, ruin, death. Therefore we prefer the interpretation adopted by Bengel and others who take ἀπό in the sense of away from a starting point, originating, emanating from, designating the effecting cause. The destruction goes forth from the face, from the presence of the Lord. This sense of ἀπό is found Acts 3:20; Rom. 13:1; Gal. 1:1. The expression "from the face of the Lord" denotes in a vivid manner the Lord as the cause of the destruction. His face, the face of the Judge, is turned upon the unbelievers, menacing, terrifying, punishing, prostrating; cp. Ex. 14:24-28. This interpretation agrees well with the final phrase "and from the glory of His power." God works and executes destruction by means of His omnipotent strength and power; and since at the time of the execution of His judgment He appears on earth in His glory, Paul says that the destruction is caused by the glory of His power, thus emphasizing the glorious manifestation of the power of Christ in His judgment upon the unbelievers. This interpretation also agrees well with the following verse which speaks of Christ's judicial appearance and activity on earth.

"When He shall come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all them that believe because our testimony among you was believed in that day." V. 10. The first clause states the time when the punishment, v. 9, shall occur, and ἔλθῃ has the force of the Future Perfect, "shall have come." The ὅταν, when, whenever, implies that the exact time of His coming is unknown. But whenever it occurs, this Advent which shall usher in eternal perdition for the wicked and unbelievers shall be the day of His glorification in His saints, the day when in His believing followers He shall be admired. While v. 7 stressed the negative side of salvation, v. 10 emphasizes the positive side. The infinitives are infinitives of purpose. The "saints" are not the angels accompanying Christ, cp. v. 7, but, as usual, the Christians. They are here called by this noble name. It is Christ that shall be glorified on that day, but He shall be glorified in His saints, His believers. By the glorious work of redeeming, justifying, sanctifying, His followers, He Himself is glorified. The glorification and salvation of His believers shall redound to His own glorification; cp. v. 12; John 17:10, 22-26. In like manner He shall be admired in all them that

believe. That heavenly salvation into which He has led the believers will be an object of joyous, marveling admiration; and that is indeed an admiration of Christ, an adoring admiration of Him who is the Author of this great salvation, Heb. 5:9. This admiration is reflected in the joyous rhythm of the two truly beautiful parallel statements. In the glory of yonder world the true character of the holiness of the Christians, which is so often despised and ridiculed by the children of this world, shall be manifested. As in the first member of the two parallels "saints" and "glorification" correspond, so in the second "faith" and "admir- ing vision." What was here the unseen object of our faith will then be seen in us by an astonished, marveling world. The present participle "believing" is better attested than the aorist participle and designates the enduring faith as characteristic of the Christians. Christ will be admired "in *all*." Every individual believer will participate in this glorification, also those who have already fallen asleep. Cp. 1 Thess. 4:13-17. The parenthetical clause "because our testimony among you was believed," made emphatic by being placed before "on that day," was added by St. Paul in order to stress the fact that the Thessalonians also belong to "them that believe." The apostle seeks to rouse in them the joyous conviction that they also are numbered with those who shall be glorified and beatified after all their tribulations. Cp. v. 7. "Our testimony" is the testimony proclaimed by the apostles, the testimony of Christ, 1 Cor. 1:6; of God, 1 Cor. 2:1, the testimony concerning Christ that God proclaims through the apostle. This "our testimony" is one "among you," ἐν ὑμῶν, has been brought to you. The words form one concept, and therefore the article is not repeated before the prepositional phrase. Cp. 1 Thess. 4:16. The last words of v. 10, "in that day," are to be connected with the two verbs "to be glorified" and "to be admired." All other suggested connections are forced, and Luther's translation, "our testimony concerning that day," is grammatically impossible. The Authorized Version has translated correctly. "That day" is the day of Christ's Second Advent, to which Paul had frequently referred already in his first letter. He adds these words after the parenthesis in order to remind the Christians at Thessalonica that only then would their rest and glorification come. Until that day they were to remain patiently faithful.

It is significant that St. Paul stresses eschatological truths although the congregation was being agitated and excited by many contradictory and false views and opinions on these matters. That a truth is being perverted or abused does not prohibit its correct use and application. The very abuse of this doctrine urged Paul to set the Thessalonians right on this important subject and to

point out the comfort implied in it for the oppressed and afflicted. In the second chapter he adds the needed warnings.

Another question may arise. In order to comfort the believers, St. Paul reminds them of the terrible fate of their persecutors. Does that not imply fostering the spirit of vindictiveness and malice toward one's enemies? Certainly not! Waiting for God's judgment is a matter altogether different from avenging oneself; cp. 1 Pet. 2:23. It was not some insignificant reason that prompted the enemies to trouble the Thessalonian Christians. They hated the servants and children of God because they hated the truth of God. In the minatory or imprecatory psalms we read similar language. Verse 8 in particular proves that salvation had been offered to these persecutors also, but they had not obeyed the Gospel. Therefore nothing but judgment remains.

"Wherefore also we pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power." V. 11. "Wherefore," εἰς δέ, does not designate the cause, but the purpose, the end and aim of Paul's prayer. "Also" is to be connected with "pray," not with "we." Paul wants to say that he and his fellow workers not only expect and hope for something, but they actually pray for its realization. This prayer is "for you," on behalf, for the benefit and welfare, of the readers, that they might be partakers of the glorification. The prayer is an incessant one, "always." Paul communes unceasingly with God in prayer. In v. 3 he thanks God on behalf of his readers, now he prays for them. Here we obtain a view of the apostle's prayer life. Cp. 1 Thess. 1:2; 1 Cor. 1:4; Phil. 1:3, 4; etc. It is not an exaggeration, it is not hyperbolic language when he uses these and similar expressions. It is exactly what God demands of every pastor and every preacher. Cp. 1 Thess. 5:17; Acts 6:4. To the apostle, prayer was half of his work and the more important half. *Ora et labora*, placing prayer before work is thoroughly Scriptural advice. To omit prayer for one's congregation makes a pastor guilty of sin, 1 Sam. 12:23. Let us pray more frequently and more earnestly for our congregations.

The object of Paul's prayer is stated in the final clause. Paul pleads with God that God would count them worthy of the calling: "Our God," he says, the God in whom we believe and whom we love, to whom we turn in all our concerns, of whom we expect the answer to our prayers. He prays that this God "would count you worthy," judge, regard, you worthy. Cp. 1 Tim. 5:17. The word never means to make worthy. "Of this calling" cannot, then, refer to the divine calling unto faith. That had already occurred when they were brought to faith by the preaching of the Gospel. The apostle has in mind a future calling of which God would judge

them worthy. The term *κλήσις* is used in the passive sense and denotes the blessing unto which one is called, the future heavenly bliss. (In like manner *ἐλπίς* is used both in an active and a passive sense, denoting either the hope within us or the blessing hoped for, as in Col. 1:5.) If we would take the word *call* here in the active sense, we would have to think of the future call, the call unto the final fruition of salvation, that brings to a successful end what the call unto faith has begun in this life. Cp. Matt. 25:34; Rev. 19:9. The apostle furthermore prays that God would "fulfill," bring to perfection, to completion, "all the good pleasure of His goodness." The word *πληρώση*, fulfill, is not construed with the double Accusative, and therefore an expression like fulfill "in you," or "for you," for whom I pray is to be supplied rather than simply "you." God is asked to fulfill in the Thessalonians "all the good pleasure of goodness." We must not refer this to God's good pleasure, as many interpreters do, interpreting the phrase of God's plan of redemption and salvation. That interpretation would conflict with the second object of "fulfill," which without doubt refers to the Thessalonians, their "work of faith." It conflicts also with the Pauline usage of "goodness," *ἀγαθωσύνη*, which in the three other passages refers to the goodness, the uprightness of the heart and life of the Christian, Rom. 15:14; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9. To justify the reference to the divine counsel of redemption, of which, indeed, *εὐδοκία*, "good pleasure," is frequently used, one would expect the definite article. Cp. Eph. 1:5, 9. The clause refers to the Thessalonians and expresses Paul's desire that God might perfect in them every pleasure in everything that is ethically good, in other words, every inclination, every desire, to be good and upright in the sight of God. This God must do, for by nature we are all inclined toward evil. This goodness, this desire for goodness is a fruit of the Spirit, and God who has begun it must bring it to perfection. That will be accomplished fully and completely upon arriving at our final goal which Paul has in view in this entire context.

And finally God is asked to fulfill "the work of faith." This expression occurs already 1 Thess. 1:3. It designates not the work that faith does. The Genitive is expegetical, the work that consists in faith. Faith is called a work, *e. g.*, John 6:29. This is the work of God, the work that God wants you to do or work, v. 28. Correctly understood, faith is indeed a work, a deed; not in so far as it produces good works and brings forth fruit. No, faith is a tearing away from trusting in oneself and a casting oneself upon the living God, Rom. 4:20, 21. This faith of the Thessalonians which had stood the test of persecution God is asked to fulfill, to bring to perfection, for God alone is the Author and Finisher of

faith. This God is to do "with power." This phrase is to be connected with the verb "fulfill" and is placed at the end for the sake of emphasis, Rom. 1:4; Col. 1:29.

"That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." V. 12. Here the final goal is named, the glory of God and Christ. That is the ultimate purpose of all things, hence also of the perfecting of the Thessalonians in faith and their being judged worthy of salvation. The name of our Lord Jesus is to be glorified. He is the Lord and Savior; hence His name is a name above every name, Phil. 2:9. This is actually saying that He Himself shall be glorified. Cp. v. 10, where the glorification is predicted of Jesus directly. Verse 10 shows that Jesus' name is Jesus Himself. The word *name* points to His self-revelation as Lord and Savior and emphasizes that He wants to be known and worshiped just as He has revealed Himself and that He actually is what He is called. His name is to be glorified "in you." Through the glorification and salvation of His believing followers He Himself is glorified, v. 10. "And ye in Him." The prepositional phrase "in Him" may be connected with "Jesus," or with "the name." The latter may be the preferable interpretation since "the name" is the chief concept and it is the Name which is being glorified, but both connections express the same truth. The Christians are to be glorified in Jesus, or in Jesus' name; they shall be partakers of His glory, of the glory of His name. The reciprocal relation as expressed in the words "the name of Jesus Christ in you and you in Him" is an exhaustive representation, as Luenemann puts it, and emphasizes the closest possible communion and fellowship. Gal. 6:14; 1 Cor. 6:13.

"According to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." St. Paul humbles all pride of man. The glorification of the name of Jesus in us and our glorification in His name we owe not to ourselves; that is due solely and only to grace. This effectually prevents any misunderstanding of the being "counted worthy," v. 11. The translation of the Authorized Version, "of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ," is not correct. The one article before the two nouns "God and Lord" signifies that both epithets are applied to the same person. Jesus Christ is our God and Lord. Thus the chapter closes with a very clear and positive testimony to the Deity of Jesus. Cp. 2 Pet. 1:1, 11; Titus 2:13.

L. FUEBRINGER

The Principium Cognoscendi in Theology

The First of Three Public Lectures delivered at Concordia Seminary,
St. Louis, Mo., April 13, 1942

The subject submitted for our consideration this morning presents a somewhat forbidding aspect. "*The Principium Cognoscendi in Theology*"—that sounds like a rather abstruse, metaphysical proposition. I hasten, therefore to assure you that this subject has a definite practical bearing on every part of the work which we are doing and preparing to do as preachers, ministers, pastors, missionaries in the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is to enable us to determine, in regard to ourselves and others, when a person is really a theologian in the estimation of Lutherans and when he is turning out genuinely theological work of abiding value. When my class, in 1883, moved into the then new seminary on Jefferson Avenue, the *principium cognoscendi* in theology was among the first subjects of study which we took up under Doctor Walther.

What is meant by a *principium cognoscendi*? Roughly translated, it signifies that which starts a person on the way of perceiving and knowing something. It is what the Germans call *Erkenntnisquelle*, source of knowledge.

Every human, or secular, science has its accumulated collection of known and proved facts, gathered from close observation and tested by laws of correct thinking and reasoning, innate in the human mind. The beginning of this knowledge has always been quite simple and crude. Out of the simple proposition that one plus one yields two the whole science of arithmetic with its rules for addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and common and decimal fractions has been built up. The science of plane and solid geometry grew out of the study of the point, the straight and the curved line, the triangle, the square, the circle, the cube, the sphere, and so on. In a similar manner the observation of the stars has yielded the science of astronomy; that of the qualities of plants the science of botany; that of animals the science of zoology; that of right and wrong the science of jurisprudence. Medicine, physics, philology, logic, philosophy, etc., have had a like origin. They have all started with certain self-evident truths, which are accepted as true and reliable without argument, simple facts that require no proof. These are called the "data of science," facts that are taken for granted and are conceded as incontestable by every person of ordinary intelligence. By studying these accepted facts and observing their congruities, similarities, and disparities, men have been led to ever greater knowledge, both of our material universe and of the human mind, as they understood the relation of one fact

to another. As these perceptions grew and the proved facts of human knowledge were gathered into a whole, arranged in some system of order, and classified, a body of knowledge for this or that particular science was built up which serves as the basis and guide to further discoveries and increased knowledge. So sure are scientists of this body of accumulated knowledge that they stake the success of their further inquiries on the knowledge already acquired and swear by it as men swear by their Bible. They claim they could not deviate from it and retain a good scientific conscience.

Let me illustrate. The knowledge which men have acquired regarding the medicinal qualities of certain substances has been gathered, for our country, into a volume called the United States Pharmacopoeia. This volume is revised every ten years by a representative body of physicians and pharmacists, and new, or better, knowledge concerning drugs gathered during the decade is entered into the new edition. Every prescription clerk in a drug store will follow its directions in compounding a recipe. Again, engineers constructing huge projects like the Mount Shasta Dam have prepared blueprints with exact measurements according to the rules of trigonometry and the calculations for sine, cosine, tangent and cotangent from the tables of logarithms. The contractors on the project are held to these blueprints and must carry them out to the smallest detail, asking no reason why, because the whole enterprise is built upon known and tested facts which are unalterable. Again, no one is admitted to the bar in our states without having passed an examination that proves his competency to apply the laws of the commonwealth. Nor can any judge decide a litigation brought into his court except by the existing laws.

The same process is in operation in all the professions: they all start from universally admitted facts and advance to wider knowledge that grows out of the initial knowledge of first principles. Even in the common crafts and trades this process is observable: they pass their trained workmen through years of apprenticeship on to the degree of a journeyman craftsman, who travels to gather wider experience by observing different methods of workmanship in his craft, until he produces his "masterpiece" — a suit of clothes, a saddle, a brick wall, or such — which is submitted to the inspection of the masters of his brotherhood of craftsmen and judged according to the accepted rules of the craft.

Now, does anything like this take place in the study of theology, and can the theologian learn anything from it? The theologian, too, starts from indisputable facts that must be granted at the outset. He must study his fundamental principle with minutest care,

learn its scope, ramifications, and goal, and arrange the results of his study in some orderly system, so as to have a complete oversight over the whole.

Yet there is a world of difference between how a theologian and how a professional scientist or ordinary craftsman works. These latter — all of them — build up their science or artisanship exclusively by the use of their reason or common sense. The visible, audible, tangible materials that are spread out in plain view in the material universe or are hidden in it and can be reached with powerful instruments, together with the palpable forces behind them, and the silent domain of the human mind with its workings — these are the subject-matter for purely human study, and the sole instrument for such study is the ordinary human intellect. Scientists do not require — they will not even admit — any outside, supernatural force that is beyond the control of their natural powers, to influence their reasoning, determine its processes, or fix their conclusions. They regard all such extraneous influences as disturbing elements that must be eliminated.

With the theologian, however, all that he is to know theologically is laid before him in a supernatural revelation, which transcends human apprehension, which he cannot reason out, but must take into his mind simply by an act of faith in Him who has revealed it.

Theology, as its name indicates, is an account of God and divine matters. These lie altogether beyond the ken of man's natural intellect. There is in man, indeed, an inborn sense and conviction of the existence of a Supreme Being, but no man possesses by nature a clear and adequate conception of God in His essence and of all things outside Himself, especially man, nor of the character of His activities, intentions, purposes, plans. Nor can any person by his reasonable deductions and conclusions build up a correct knowledge of God and of matters pertaining to Him. Job is asked: "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea," chap. 11:7-9. Paul exclaims: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? or who has been His counselor? Or who has first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him?" Rom. 11:33-35. Answer: Nobody. The theologian Paul declares that he had been sent to preach things "that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man," 1 Cor. 2:9. Of the love of Christ, which his theology had taught him, he says, that it "passeth

knowledge," Eph. 3:19, and of the peace which it brings to human hearts, that it "passeth all understanding," Phil. 4:7, namely, all that men can grasp by the natural powers of their intellect. Theologians are lifted by their study above this world of finite matter and force into a world of infinite power, where the Spirit of God alone works; out of this temporal existence, where events follow events as the clock strikes, into the sphere of timeless eternity, and find the true value of persons and things fixed by new, unheard-of standards.

Therefore, theology is not a science alongside of other sciences. Aristotle has defined science as the faculty of demonstrating conclusions from necessary premises of reason. This definition is true in human philosophy, but it does not fit theology, because theology never operates with facts supplied by the mind of man, but with facts furnished by God Himself through revelation. Moreover, these facts the theologian apprehends, not by an act of reasoning, but by implicit trust in God, who is speaking to him in His revelation. Lastly, this faith the theologian does not elicit out of himself by some powerful mental effort, but it is, even against his reason, implanted in him by the Holy Spirit of God through the revelation which he is studying. All this is supernatural. The theologian lives and moves and has his being in a world entirely his own, and theology is in a class by itself. It has been called a science, because it is also concerned with what men should know, but that is done by a loose use of the term, not in a strict definition.

The *principium cognoscendi* in theology, then, is the revelation which God has made at sundry times and in divers manners, lastly by the sending of His incarnate Son, and which He has had recorded in human language by holy men, filled with His Holy Spirit, who composed the various writings which make up God's Word, the Bible. All genuine theological knowledge must be drawn from these sacred documents, entirely from them, not partly from them, partly from other sources. The whole business of a theologian is to study intently these writings in all their parts and details, to grasp the intended meaning of every word and clause, and to set them forth clearly in speech and writing for the benefit of others. He must be alert, while reading what God has spoken through the prophets, through His Son, and through His Son's apostles and evangelists, to note carefully every point of doctrine, great or small; every admonition, correction, and warning; every suggestion for righteous living and conduct; every encouraging word of cheer and comfort. Last, not least, he must pray without ceasing for the illumination and guidance of the Holy Spirit. In this way he becomes, like the young pastor Timothy, a "man of God, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

The theologian's source of knowledge presents him with ac-

counts of miraculous happenings, inexplicable by the so-called laws of nature. It also calls his attention to matters which it designates as "mysteries"; for instance, the union of the two distinct natures in the one person of Christ, the spiritual union of believers with Christ, and the indwelling of the entire Trinity in their hearts, the so-called "mystical union"; and others. What is the theologian to do with these matters? He is to present the miracles simply as what they are, without any attempt at giving a reasonable explanation of them, for which there is no warrant in Scripture. The mysteries he is to proclaim as what God says they are, mysteries, matters that cannot be explained. For, if he could explain them, they would no longer be mysteries. That means, they would be something outside of and foreign to Scripture.

And so, throughout his activity the theologian is restricted to the Word of God. His rule is the old axiom: *Quod non est biblicum, non est theologicum*, that is: "Whatever is not Biblical, is none of the theologian's business." In all his studies, in all his utterances, the red light of warning is again and again flashed against him: *Nil nisi Scriptura!* "Nothing without the warrant of Scripture!" *Nihil ultra Scripturam!* It is a notice of danger ahead: there is no thoroughfare for him where Scripture has charted no road on which he is to travel. Where God in His sacred writings stops, he has to stop his theological efforts and simply confess his ignorance. Such a confession may expose him to men's ridicule, but it is a badge of honor that makes the angels smile over him.

In any discussion of a matter of his religion a theologian can have a legitimate interest only when both sides to the discussion accept at the start the authority of the Scriptures and the question under debate is: Which side has the correct understanding of God's Word. Were Scripture eliminated in the premises from the discussion, the theologian would consider it a foolhardy and futile venture to become a party to it; for he would go into the discussion without proper credentials and tools for his workmanship. Luther's advice on an attempt of this kind is excellent. In his second series of comments on First Peter, in 1539, Luther takes up these words in chap. 3:15: "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you," and remarks, amongst other things: "When you meet with people so utterly blinded and hardened as to deny what Christ and the apostles have spoken and written is God's Word, or who doubt it, just keep quiet, do not exchange a word with them, let them go, and only say: 'I will give you proof enough from Scripture: if you will believe it, well and good; if not, go your way.' But I hear you say: 'Ah, in that case God's Word will make a poor showing!' Answer: 'Just leave that to God.'" 9:1238 f.

What is it that bears the theologian up under his tasks of maintaining the authority of his *principium cognoscendi* against all odds? Is it the approval of his own intellect? Is it the applause of other men? Is it worldly gain? Nay; only his unquestioning faith in the truth of his *principium* upholds him and bears him along. He declares: "By faith I know. I move in the world of the unseen and the intangible; but my faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. I hold already as a present possession what shall be handed over to me in the future; and invisible things are set before me in plain outline as evident." Such confident trust in the oracles of God, the Holy Scriptures, is the indispensable requisite for any genuine theological effort and the mark by which a true theologian is recognized. Without that faith theological work becomes a hideous drudgery, and the theologian a melancholy object to contemplate. For preaching God's Word for others to believe in, while he himself repudiates it in his heart, he becomes the grossest kind of a hypocrite and a walking self-contradiction. One should prefer crushing stone by the roadside to studying theology without believing in the *principium cognoscendi*.

Scientists have been lauded for their passionate devotion to their science. Pushing aside resolutely every distracting influence, their mind riveted to their research, they have launched their theories and hypotheses, and have advanced step by step to greater knowledge, often, admittedly, by guesswork and the trial and error method. Only the undiscerning masses take their probabilities for realities and their scientific dreams and poetry for verities of established facts.

If these men can cling with such tenacity, yea, with such stubbornness to their *principia*, with how much greater joy and fidelity should a theologian cling to his? In theology the faithful workman finds something greater than all the sciences can offer. Here he is face to face with the Great Unknown, and voices out of the boundlessness of eternity direct him in the way he must go. Instinctively he puts off his shoes, for he is aware that he is standing on holy ground. As he opens the Holy Book for study, he whispers reverently with young Samuel at the sanctuary: "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth," 1 Sam. 3:10.

In the age of rationalism the authority of the Scriptures was openly rejected. A believing churchman of Germany in those days poured out his grief to God in these lines:

Wenn dein Wort nicht mehr soll gelten,
Worauf soll der Glaube ruhn?
Mir ist's nicht um tausend Welten,
Sondern um dein Wort zu tun!

(Here is an opportunity for Concordia's poets to try their ingenuity in reproducing old Woltersdorf's sentiments.) What he said amounts to this:

If Thy Word, Lord, is deemed worthless,
The support of faith is gone.
Thousand worlds I'd gladly forfeit
To hold fast Thy Word alone.

That expresses the devout conviction of every sincere theologian. When the Word of God is abrogated, all truly theological functions come to a stop, and we close this seminary as a school of theology, for our *principium cognoscendi* is gone.

I conclude with a few heartfelt utterances of Luther. He says: "A theologian's first concern must be, to be thoroughly conversant with the text of Scripture and to maintain this principle that sacred matters are not subject to debate." V:456. Again: "The theologian who does not make his beginning by hearing God's Word and believing it, is going to be a failure; he will not accomplish anything as it should be and will not preach correctly, even though he had all the wisdom of the world." VIII:37. Again: "Theologians must not consider it a trifling matter, when the sublime Majesty forbids whatsoever does not proceed from the mouth of the Lord." XIX:821. Again: "A theologian and preacher must not say: 'Lord, forgive me if I have taught what is wrong'; but of everything that he teaches in public, and writes, he must be sure that it is God's Word." XXII:1507. Lastly: "All that one has to do in theology is, to hear, and believe, and firmly hold in the heart this fact: God is truthful, no matter how silly it seems what God says in His Word." V:457.

Berkeley, Calif.

W. H. T. DAU

Outlines on the Wuerttemberg Epistle Selections

Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Acts 17:24-31

Oh, that someone had the gift of looking ten years into the future! What will be the condition of our world in 1952? Will it be ruled by dictators, by highly concentrated money power, by some superpowerful league of nations, or will it bow under the yoke of a few ruthless, lawless nations? Will the forces of evil gain in strength, or shall some more righteous form of world administration materialize?

Whatever the eventual answer to these questions may be, the Christian, enlightened by the Holy Scriptures, knows that whatever man-made powers will arise, God will still rule the world.

God Rules the World

1. *This truth is comforting to the Christian surrounded by the world*
2. *This truth is assuring especially during this disturbed period of the world*
3. *This truth reminds us that by His rulership God speaks to the world*

1

a) While preaching in Athens, Paul was confronted with some of the most highly developed idolatry of the ancient world; "He saw the city wholly given to idolatry," v. 16. He describes his audience as "too superstitious," v. 22, i. e., too much devoted to divinities. Not content with service to the common gods, the Athenians had erected an altar to "the Unknown God," v. 23. The Acropolis with its magnificent Parthenon, still in existence today, could be seen from the place where Paul stood. Amid this entrenched idolatry, Paul calmly and confidently asserts the futility of all idols and temples, and preaches the true God who made and rules all things, vv. 24, 25.

In our land we are not confronted with heathen temples and idols today, but we have idolatry nevertheless: worship of money, self-indulgence, materialism, the pleasure craze not yet seriously checked by the war. Phil. 3:19.

b) Paul was also confronted with some of the best intellects of Athens: Certain philosophers of the Epicureans and Stoics had accosted him, v. 18. Luke describes the Athenians as spending their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing, v. 21. Paul was speaking before some of the politically important people of Athens, the Areopagites, v. 19.

So Christians are surrounded by a world which prides itself on its intellectual achievements. Science has been greeted as the savior of mankind. A false science has often contradicted the Bible, denied the existence of God and His creation, even as rationalism in Athens put an end to the sermon on Mars' Hill, v. 32. The overthrow of the Bible and Christianity has often been predicted.

c) Over against all this, Paul calmly asserts: God made the world and all things therein; He giveth to all life and breath and all things. Surrounded by a wicked, unbelieving world, the Christian has the assurance that God rules over all.

2

a) We are living in a disturbed world; not only do we have a global war such as the world has never seen before, not only are destructive forces let loose that terrify the imagination, but national boundaries are crumbling, and nations of long standing are threat-

ened with extinction. Where will this end? Will greed and ambition dominate all, and honesty and order be banished?

b) God rules over all nations, Ps. 2:4. He has "determined the times before appointed," v. 26. Each nation has its divinely allotted time; when God's time has come, it will rise to greatness, and when His time has come, it will decay and disappear. Example: The great Roman Empire of Christ's time disappeared when God's time had come.

God also rules over national boundaries: He has determined "the bounds of their habitation," v. 26. God, the Ruler, will finally determine where each nation shall dwell. He may use wars to accomplish His purpose, but even warring nations must finally bow before Him, Ps. 46:6, 9, 10.

c) We Christians have this confidence in a world in turmoil, that God rules even now. We may not now see the purpose of His plans, but we can trust in Him to carry out His purposes, Job 13:15; Ps. 40:4.

3

a) God's government of this world has a message also for the heathen: "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him," v. 27. The raising and destruction of nations, the setting and removal of national boundaries, no less than His whole work of creation, v. 25, preaches to the world in plain language: There is a God to whom you owe obedience, Rom. 1:19, 20. We correctly interpret the turmoil of our day only if we hear therein the powerful voice of our God calling to men to repent, v. 30, and warning them of judgment to come, v. 31.

b) God's government of the world of our day has a special message to Christians: A world that has heard God's call to repentance needs the Gospel of Christ. Paul's sermon on Mars' Hill passed from God's government to Christ, v. 31. Our world needs Christ and His Gospel. Our times are opening new doors for the Church. Let us heed God's voice of our times, be active, and work the work of Him that sent us.

H. O. A. KEINATH

Tenth Sunday after Trinity

1 Tim. 1:12-17

Even a casual reading of this text will leave the impression that the apostle was deeply moved when he wrote these words. They deal with a topic that once was an abomination to him but through a strange series of events had become near and dear to his heart both on account of its meaning to himself and because it was the very core of the message to whose proclamation he was determined to devote every ounce of energy throughout the remaining days of his life. That topic is grace.

The Exceeding Abundance of the Grace of God in Christ Jesus

1. *As it manifested itself in the life of St. Paul*
2. *As it manifests itself towards all sinners*

1

The apostle first draws a picture of himself prior to his conversion, v. 13. A "blasphemer." He spoke against the Lord and compelled others to do the same, Acts 26:11. A "persecutor." Acts 22:4; 9:4, 5. "Injurious." But this is a weak translation, better "insolent, overbearing," i. e., one who displays his insolence not merely by words but by deeds. For the meaning of the verb cf. Luke 18:32. All this sums up as blackest guilt.

But what a different person he is now! He has "faith and love which is in Christ Jesus," v. 14. The unbeliever has become a believer in Christ; his hate has turned into a passionate love towards his Master and His disciples. Even more than this. He is now a minister in the service of that same Jesus whom he persecuted, v. 12. The monstrous sinner has been changed into a penitent believer and mighty apostle of the Lord (Lenski).

Verse 13b gives the reason why this change was brought about. There was nothing that the unconverted Paul had, knowledge, zeal for the Law, or any other quality that had counted. Simply he obtained mercy. His ignorance is not mentioned as an excuse but to show that God had to use mercy if Paul was to be brought out of his spiritual darkness. The apostle, one of the best educated men of his day and nation, humbles himself completely and gives all glory to God.

The method which God employed in bringing about the remarkable change in his chosen vessel further emphasizes God's grace. Christ Jesus "enabled him," or, more literally, "*gave new power within.*" The old force in Paul which drove him to give expression to his enmity to the Lord was replaced by God by a new force impelling Paul to a life of devotion to, and service in, the cause of his new Master. It was all an act of grace on the part of God.

In view of the exceeding grace shown him, the apostle is thankful, v. 12a. He joyfully acknowledges his debt to God's grace, v. 14a.

2

Paul stands not alone as the recipient of God's grace in Christ Jesus. All men by nature are enemies of God, their will is perverted, and even the fact that they may not realize their precarious condition does not render them guiltless. They are all under the curse and will have to bear the consequence of their sinfulness. And there is nothing that they themselves can do about it. If they are to be saved, God alone can make provision.

It is here that divine grace shows the way out of his dilemma to the sinner, v. 15b. Jesus' coming into the world includes His entire work of redemption from His incarnation to His death on the cross. The grace of God in Christ Jesus opens the way for the sinner to escape God's wrath and eternal doom. Salvation is now an accomplished fact, and all that the sinner needs to do is accept what Jesus has earned for him. No works on his part could save him nor are they required. And the Gospel brings this joyful news to the ears of the sinner by God's express command to his disciples.

But is this not a plan too fantastic to be true? God through the mouth of His apostle removes all doubt, v. 15a. The Gospel message is absolutely true and reliable. It is backed not by integrity of respectable men but by our God, who is Truth. He cannot deceive us. Behold further the experience of Paul as an example of what the grace of God in Christ Jesus has in store for any sinner, v. 16.

Truly, when we thus consider the grace of God in Christ Jesus, we must with a full heart join in the apostle's concluding doxology, v. 17.

G. V. SCHICK

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

James 2:13-17

Man is justified without the works of the Law, alone by faith in Jesus Christ. That is the core and center of the Christian religion, the doctrine with which the Christian Church stands or falls. This doctrine is proclaimed on nearly every page of the Bible. Of this doctrine give all the prophets witness, Acts 10:43; Christ, John 3:16; Paul, Rom. 3:24-28; all apostles. Thus also James. Upon this doctrine he bases all his admonitions addressed to the twelve tribes, 1:1. Chap. 2:1: The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In our text James takes occasion to warn against an ever present danger.

Beware of a Dead Faith

1. *How it is recognized*
2. *In what it results*

1

A dead faith often hides behind pious words and assurances. A man may *say* he has faith, v. 14; he may even be very free and emphatic in making that statement; he may *recite* the Creed—especially also the Second Article—with the congregation, and yet delude himself, may mistake the mere knowledge of Biblical truths for the faith of the heart. V. 15: "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of bread," or be in any other kind of want, he

may have some very pious wishes to offer: "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled," v. 16a, may the good Lord take care of you and, out of His mercy and great abundance, provide you with all that you need. Thus he may surround himself with a halo of being very religious, 1:26, and yet be entirely devoid of the true faith of the heart. Thus he may deceive others and even himself. Only *seems* to be religious, 1:26. This self-deception is the worst kind of deception. Then how can the dead faith be recognized?

It can be recognized by the absence of its fruits. "Faith, if it hath not *works*, is dead, being alone," v. 17. Though he is able and in a position to help, he does not give "those things which are needful to the body" nor offer any real assistance to those whose destitution is brought to his attention and even cries out to him. Perhaps he finds to his own satisfaction that the need is not very great, that there is no *stark* nakedness nor *utter* lack of food. Or the man having a dead faith does not visit the fatherless and widows, does not keep himself unspotted from the world, 1:27; or does not regard the poor, 2:1-3; or does not bridle his tongue, 3:5-10; or does not show fairness and justice, 5:4, 5. As a tree is known by its fruits, so a true and living faith is known by its works and the false and dead faith by the absence of them. Matt. 7:17-20; Gal. 5:19-26.

Beware of a dead faith! Where are the fruits of your faith? Good works indeed do not merit salvation, neither in whole nor in part, Rom. 3:24, 28, they are not necessary for *salvation*, but they are necessary. Why? God looks for them, Eph. 2:10; 2 Cor. 5:15; the spiritual and material welfare of your neighbor requires them, Matt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:12; Gal. 6:10; Matt. 5:42; to you they are the evidence of the sincerity of your faith. True, living faith is always active through love, Gal. 5:6.

2

V. 14. "What doth it profit?" A barren faith may *seem* to be profitable. A person having a dead faith may gain a better standing in his community, may be looked upon as a very respectable and devout man, as a reliable business associate, etc. In his church he may be admired for his depth of Biblical knowledge, for his readiness to dig even deeper into Scriptural truths, for his ability to discuss theological problems. He may step into a position of leadership, etc. But again we ask with St. James, "What doth it profit?" The answer is, nothing. In a dead faith there is not profit for his salvation. St. James asks, "Can [the, that] faith save him?" The answer again is, no. To *say* one has faith and to *have* it, are two different things. The dead faith is nothing but a sham and a make-believe. No, such "faith" cannot save.

Worse than that! V. 13. "He shall have judgment without

mercy that hath not showed mercy." St. James is here not speaking of the so-called mercy of unbelievers, who are frequently ready to lend a helping hand to the indigent and suffering. Their virtues are nothing but glittering vices; for without faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11:6. He is here speaking of those—actually in the same class with unbelievers—who claim to have faith but whose faith is without fruit, dead, who have not the mercy that is heaven-born, that is wrought by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel of Christ, that can be found only in a heart that clings to Christ as the Savior. He who has not this mercy shall have judgment without mercy. Matt. 25:41-46a; Luke 12:48b.

Beware of a dead faith; it leads to eternal disaster. On the other hand, v. 13b, real "mercy rejoiceth against judgment." He who has the mercy that springs from God's mercy in Jesus Christ need not fear judgment; on the contrary, he can rejoice, be full of glad confidence at the approach of judgment, for he knows that his Savior will publicly acknowledge his works of mercy as evidences of a living faith in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Let us return to our beginning. Man is justified not by the deeds of the Law, but alone by faith in Christ; but let us make sure that it is a living faith, not a dead one. R. NEITZEL

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Rom. 7:18 to 8:4

The Christian religion is the only saving religion. To enter life eternal one must be a Christian. It is therefore a vital question "What constitutes a Christian?"

Paul, a Model Christian

1. *He laments his sinful depravity*
2. *He rejoices in his deliverance*
3. *He walks after the Spirit*

I

From Paul we learn that self-satisfaction and Christianity are incompatible opposites. A Christian does not lull himself into a false security of perfection. A Christian knows, 7:18, 19: that sin dwelleth in him, v. 20; that evil is present with him, v. 21; that the law of sin brings him into captivity, vv. 23, 25. He knows that because his body is a body of sin, a sinful body (cp. Rom. 6:6), it is a body of death, 6:12, a mortal body, subject to sickness, death, decay, corruption. Not a pleasant thought, 2 Cor. 5:4.

The Christian laments, v. 24; he is altogether dissatisfied with himself. Others may praise him. In his own eyes he is a wretched

man as far as his own efforts are concerned. The better he becomes acquainted with himself, the better he learns by his own experience the truth of Gen. 8:21b; Ps. 51:5; Matt. 15:19, the more humble he becomes. As he sees that even his best efforts are contaminated with the filth of sin, he hides his face in shame, falls down before his God and exclaims, 7:24.

2

V. 25a. The Christian has been delivered from this bondage of sin, not through his own effort, since the Law could never deliver from sin and death because of the weakness of his flesh, and in his flesh dwelleth no good thing. Therefore he cannot attain through his own efforts that perfection which the Law requires in order that man be pronounced free from sin. God Himself effected a deliverance, sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. The Son of God became like man, resembling sinful man in every respect excepting sin, endowed with a human intellect, human emotions, human will, subject to human sufferings, yet at all times holy, Heb. 7:26. This God-man was sent "for sin," to expiate, to atone for man's sin, to deprive it of its power to rule, to enslave, to accuse, to condemn man. When Christ died on Calvary, sin had lost its jurisdiction over mankind. By the second Adam the sons of Adam had been delivered from the dominion of sin.

Into this glorious liberty the Christian has been brought by the Spirit of Life through Word and Sacrament, 8:2. The Christian, knowing that Christ has redeemed him from the guilt of sin, thanks God that even though his flesh still serves sin, his mind, his new spiritual nature serves God, and that God judges him not according to the flesh, but according to the new man.

3

This joyful assurance does not lure the Christian into false security, but urges him unto holiness and good works. That is the purpose God had in mind when He sent His Son, 8:3, 4. Redemption is not an end in itself, but serves another end: it makes possible sanctification. The Spirit frees the Christian from the state of sin and death, and translates him into the state of righteousness and life, 8:2. Now the Christian is able to will good, 7:18. He hates sin and loves the good, v. 19. He delights in the Law of God, v. 22, serves the Law of God, v. 25.

So the Christian walking after the Spirit, battling against sin, though remaining imperfect throughout his lifetime, can in the faith of Jesus, who has delivered him not only from the guilt and punishment but also from the power of sin, exclaim, 8:1.

TH. LAETSCH

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity**Phil. 2:1-11**

Christians should strive together for the faith of the Gospel. Thus Paul had said in words almost immediately preceding our text, 1:27. In order to do this according to the will of God and effectively, they should do so "with one mind." Therefore the apostle's exhortation in our text, v. 2.

Christians Should Be Likeminded in All Humility

1. *The exhortation to be likeminded, vv. 1-4*
2. *The enforcement of the exhortation by the example of Christ, vv. 5-9*

1

a) As to things only concerning this life Christians may have different opinions; but in their attitude toward God, His Word, their spiritual relations toward their fellow men, Christians should be of the same mind, v. 2.

b) The reason or motive for such likemindedness is found in v. 1. In respect to any consolation or exhortation of which Christ is the source; in respect to any comfort which flows from love; in respect to the common fellowship of Christians in the Spirit; in respect to any spiritual emotions and compassions: all these things the Christians have in common, and by these they should be actuated to be of the same mind, having the same love to God and their fellow men, v. 2.

c) Likemindedness among Christians is hindered by selfishness, strife, a party spirit, and by vainglory, each seeking to satisfy his own selfish and sinful desires, v. 3a; Gal. 5:13-15. Likemindedness is promoted by unselfishness and humility, v. 3; Eph. 4:1-6; 1 Cor. 1:10, 11. A Christian may look to his own interests but not to the exclusion of those of others, v. 4; he should even esteem others better than himself, v. 3.

Application. — Much selfishness, pride, conceit, party spirit is found among Christians and hinders their mutual Christian relation and their co-operation in things spiritual and in building Christ's kingdom. Thereby also offense is given not only to fellow Christians but also to the people of this world. Christians should by God's grace seek to overcome all this by heeding the apostle's admonition and, as the apostle furthermore exhorts, by the example of Christ.

2

a) Christ is the very God Himself. He, therefore, did not think it robbery to be equal with God; that is, He did not, by claiming to be God, assume to be what He was not, v. 6.

b) But although Christ is God, He emptied Himself, *ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν*, "made Himself of no reputation," as the King James Version has it, "aeusserte sich selbst," as Luther translated. Christ did not empty or divest Himself of His divine attributes, but wherein His emptying Himself consisted, Paul tells, saying, "He took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," vv. 7, 8.

Not in becoming or being a man, for Christ is still true man, did His emptying or His humbling Himself consist, but as man becoming a *servant* to the extent that He finally "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," vv. 7, 8.

c) Paul's exhortation that Christians be of the same mind, in all humility serving one another, esteeming others better than themselves, vv. 3, 4, he enforces by the example of Christ, saying, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," v. 5. Since Christ, the almighty God and sinless man, so humbled Himself for us, how much more should we, sinful as we are, humble ourselves in the sight of God and toward our fellow sinners. The humility that is characteristic of Christ should be characteristic of Christ's followers.

Then even as Christ was highly exalted by God, vv. 9-11, so God will graciously exalt us, 1 Pet. 1:5 a, 6. J. H. C. FRITZ



Miscellanea

Concerning Chancel Choirs

"The chancel should not be crowded with benches and desks, which has a very bad effect, but should be kept as open as possible. In small chancels it is certainly best not to have a surpliced choir, so that only stalls for the clergy and a few seats for servers are needed. Whatever choir there is can then be accommodated in a gallery with the organ, which will increase reverence, economize space, and improve the quality of the singing.

"I do not think there can be much doubt that this is the ideal arrangement even in most large churches. Except in 'Quires and Places where they sing,' that is to say in cathedral, collegiate, and suchlike churches, surpliced choirs are a nineteenth century innovation, and still in the experimental stage. And surely the old plan was a wise one: cathedral and collegiate churches have two qualifications for such choirs, which most parish churches have not; they possess real structural quires a good distance from the sanctuary—not merely chancels; and their foundations allow of careful supervision and constant musical training of the boys. There is something to be said for exceptionally large, rich, and central churches starting foundations, becoming, in fact, collegiate; but many parsons are beginning to ask themselves whether in ordinary parish churches the innovation has justified itself. Its ethical and musical bearings are beyond the province of this book; one can only say that the behavior of choirs and the quality of the music they produce in average parish churches suggests that we are in need of some reformation in the matter.

"For these reasons alone it is probable that such choirs will tend to decrease amongst us. We are not at present a musical nation, as is proved by the fact that we maintain a great company of organ-grinders, and in other ways batten on the musical refuse of other countries. As we become more musical, the number of men and boys in our choirs will probably decrease; we shall no longer try to herd in as many as the chancel can possibly hold, for we shall seek less for noise and more for music; we shall have more practices and insist that they are attended, and the braver choirmasters will even refuse to admit choristers who cannot sing. Consequently choirs will become much smaller. Many churches will be content with four or even two paid rulers, to lead the singing and chant the alternate verses of the psalms and canticles. I think that as the choirs decrease, the congregations will increase.

"Perhaps with these modifications the surpliced choir will survive, at least in places. The question will no doubt settle itself on musical grounds. But the artist and the ecclesiologist would come to pretty much the same conclusion as I have prophesied for the musician. Ecclesiastical precedent is against surpliced choirs in ordinary parish churches, and large choirs are not conducive to reverence. Esthetically, there is a distinct loss in crowding the chancel with a mass of white; indeed, in the days when color effect was understood, the surplices

(in the cathedral churches, which had choirs) were covered nearly all the year with black cloth copes (which were more like black gowns than ceremonial copes), and traces of this still remain in the boys' gowns at Lincoln and the purple gowns at Norwich Cathedral. As for parish churches, the inventories show an extraordinarily small number of surplices and rochets, which puts the non-existence of surpliced choirs in the ordinary church beyond a doubt. There were just a few exceptionally placed churches where a few boys sang in the choir, as St. Peter's, Cornhill, where there were seven boys' surplices. In the same way there is evidence that in large parish churches there were rulers who had seats in the midst of the choir in imitation of the cathedrals. We learn also, from an interesting passage in the Sarum Customary, that provision was made for such an imitation of the cathedral use in parish churches, the boys ('if there are any') standing in front of the choir stalls, while other 'clerks' occupied places to the east of what we should call the clergy-stalls, just as they do nowadays. I do not suggest that we are to be bound by medieval precedent as to the number of choristers we employ; but I do say that surpliced choirs have been largely introduced simply because they were thought to be 'high church,' and that this idea was a mistaken one, whether a 'high churchman' be regarded as a scrupulous obeyer of the Prayer Book, or as a follower of Caroline, or Medieval, or even of modern Continental customs. This idea, then, being disposed of, we must judge surpliced choirs by their fruits—musical, moral, artistic, and devotional. That judgment is now being formed; and I, for one, shall not be surprised if the result is not to prove, as usual, that the old ways are best." (Quoted from Dearmer, *The Parson's Handbook*, pp. 46—49.)

Which Is the Proper Parament Color for the Epiphany Season?

In reply to a number of inquiries received concerning this question, we have again consulted some of the foremost authorities in the field of paramentics, specifically those of the Anglican Church and of the Lutheran Church of Germany. There is a practical unanimity on this point: the color is properly green. Dearmer (Episcopalian) in *The Parson's Handbook*, p. 115 f., says: Epiphany Octave to Septuagesima, green. Lee (Episcopalian) in the *Directorium Anglicanum*, states: White for the evening of Christmas Eve to the Octave of Epiphany inclusive; green on all other days. Smart (Protestant Episc.) in his *The Altar, Its Ornaments, and Its Care*, p. 50, writes: "Green is used for the period between the Octave of Epiphany and Septuagesima." Meurer (Lutheran) in his *Altarschmuck*, p. 52 f., says: "Gruen fuer die Epiphaniens- und Trinitatiszeit." And Koch (Evangelical) in his book *Das Kirchengeraet im evangelischen Gottesdienst*, p. 48 f., has the same direction: "Erster Sonntag nach Epiphania bis Estomihi, Gruen." P. E. K.

Zur Lehre vom Antichrist

Wir lesen in „Lehre und Wehre“, 1888, S. 71 f.: Wenn Kliefoth, die Lehre vom Antichrist betreffend, behauptet, unsere alten Dogmatiker hätten „nicht so aufsehend gehandelt“, das Urtheil, der Papst sei der Antichrist, für einen Glaubens- und Bekenntnissatz zu halten, und zum Beweise Quenstedt

anführt, welcher ausdrücklich hervorhebe, es handle sich bei dieser Frage nicht um einen „Glaubensartikel, cuius ignorantia vel negatio damnat“, so ist dieses zwar nur ein logischer Schnitzer, welchen sich Kliefoth zu Schulden kommen läßt, indem er daraus, daß Quenstedt sagt, es sei nicht ein solcher Glaubensartikel, dessen Unbekanntheit oder Leugnung verdammt, alsbald schließt, es sei nach Quenstedt's Meinung überhaupt gar kein Glaubensartikel. Wenn er aber weiter behauptet: „Sollte er das“ (nämlich ein Glaubensartikel) „sein, so müßte er, so wie er lautet, seinem ganzen Inhalte nach aus der Heiligen Schrift erhoben werden können, weil nur die Schrift allein Artikel des Glaubens setzen kann. Das ist aber nicht der Fall, da die Schrift nirgendwo vom Papst zu Rom redet“ usw. — so hätte es allerdings nach Kliefoth damals, als das Neue Testament noch nicht geschrieben war, auch nicht ein Glaubenssatz sein können, daß Jesus von Nazareth der geweissagte Messias ist. Nun gibt zwar Kliefoth zu, daß allerdings das Resultat der Feststellung dessen, „was die Heilige Schrift von der zu erwartenden Erscheinung eines Antichrists weisagt“, „die Bedeutung eines Glaubensartikels anzusprechen“ habe, „weil es ein Teil der göttlichen Weissagung ist“. Damit wäre nun zwar die Hauptsache gewonnen, wenn nur Theologen wie Kliefoth solche Weissagungen recht verstanden. Weil aber die Weissagung erst recht im Lichte der Erfüllung erkannt und verstanden wird, Kliefoth aber gegen die Erfüllung sein Auge verschließt, muß er auch in bezug auf die Weissagung im Dunkeln tappen, ähnlich wie die Juden Christo gegenüber. Und was ist es, wenn er behauptet, „Resultate . . . geschichtlicher Forschung und Urteile über geschichtliche Thatfachen und Erscheinungen können, wenn sie nicht — was hier nicht der Fall ist — ein ausdrücklich gewährleistendes Wort der Schrift für sich haben, niemals die Bedeutung von Glaubenssätzen ansprechen, selbst nicht, wenn sie wahr sind, und selbst nicht, wenn sie sich in Bekenntnisschriften ausgesprochen finden“? Wir wollen hierauf Luther antworten lassen, der in seiner Schrift wider Erasmus („Daß der freie Wille nichts sei“. Dresdner deutsche Ausg., S. 247 f.) also schreibt: „Du wartest vielleicht auf einen Spruch aus der Schrift, der mit diesen Worten und Silben also laute: Das beste und höchste Stück am Menschen ist Fleisch; sonst willst du weit überaus gewonnen haben. Gleich als wenn die Juden forderten, man sollte ihnen aus den Propheten einen Spruch bringen, der mit diesen Silben und Worten also lautet: Jesus, der Zimmermannssohn, der geboren ist von Maria der Jungfrauen zu Bethlehem, der ist Messias und Gottes Sohn.“

Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

A Re-Appraisal of the Meaning of Lutheran Unity.—Under this heading Rev. Otto W. Heick (U. L. C. A., Ellis, Kansas) has published in *The Lutheran Church Quarterly* (XV, 2, April, 1942) an exhaustive analysis of the question of Lutheran Church union which, because of its conciliatory tone and consistent straightforwardness in the declaration of the writer's views, deserves careful consideration. The essay discusses, in the main, two thoughts: (1) the problem of altar and pulpit fellowship, and (2) some of the doctrinal issues in the conflict between the Missouri and Iowa [?] Synods on the one hand, and the United Lutheran Church on the other. But just because of the author's frank expression of his opinions, the investigation brings out in strong relief (in so far as he really voices the views of his Church) the fundamental difference between the U. L. C. A. and the Missouri Synod, not merely on the question of altar and pulpit fellowship of Lutherans with Calvinists, but on the whole doctrinal cleavage. To Missouri absolute and complete unity in doctrine is the goal to be striven for earnestly; to the U. L. C. A. it is enough merely to hold the Christian fundamentals. Missouri believes in a strict adherence to the Galesburg Rule; the U. L. C. A., merely in its "discriminate application." We cull from the article a number of statements to illustrate the truth of these statements.

As Pastor Heick says, the U. L. C. A. opposes "*indiscriminate* [italics in original] pulpit and altar fellowship with pastors and churches of other denominations, whereby doctrinal differences are ignored or virtually made matters of indifference" (Pittsburgh Agreement, endorsed at the Omaha Convention, 1940), while Missouri (Synodical Conference) opposes "this elastic application of the Galesburg Rule," insisting "that there cannot and shall not be any altar or pulpit fellowship with members of the Reformed faith; for the peculiarities of the Reformed Confessions are looked upon, not as a possible understanding of the Scriptures different from the Lutheran interpretation, but as a perversion of Scriptural truth." Pastor Heick does not favor "the rigid application of this principle." But does not Missouri (omitting the Scriptural phase of the question for the present) by its decisive stand in this matter represent historic Lutheranism, which has declared and published its condemnation not only of Romanistic, but also of Reformed error? Dare Lutherans who wish to be true to Scripture really regard "the peculiarities of the Reformed Confessions" merely as a "possible understanding of the Scriptures different from the Lutheran interpretation"? If that principle holds, where shall the line be drawn in case of the heresies of Mormons, "Jehovah's Witnesses," and similar cults? Are they, too, not entitled to their "interpretations," and must not Lutherans respect them also?—Again, Pastor Heick says that the U. L. C. A. "acknowledges that any group which accepts the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism as its doctrinal basis is entitled to the name *Lutheran* and worthy of unrestricted fellowship." But what if

Lutherans, accepting these two Confessions as their "doctrinal basis," deny essential doctrines of Scripture? Or, suppose that in principle they receive these Confessions, while in reality they hold and defend opposing doctrines? Shall in that case "unrestricted fellowship" continue nevertheless? Not the Augsburg Confession, not Luther's Catechism, but Scripture, in the final analysis, is the foundation upon which true unity in faith rests.—Pastor Heick, moreover, disapproves of "the position of the Missouri Synod which holds that the name *Lutheran* requires unreserved subscription to the whole Book of Concord" and that "the theology of Missouri aims to be a theology of the Formula of Concord." Two historical inaccuracies are involved in this presentation; for Missouri regards as Lutherans also those who accept as their doctrinal basis only the two Confessions named, though it maintains that their stand is inconsistent, since the theology of the Confessions in the Book of Concord is a doctrinal unit, for which reason also the theology of Missouri does not aim to be that only of the Formula of Concord, but of all the Confessions in the *Concordia*. But overlooking these historical inaccuracies, let us ask: Why should there be so much opposition on the part of some Lutherans to receive as authoritative also the Formula of Concord? Is not the Formula of Concord doctrinally in full accord with the Augsburg Confession? Or, speaking historically: Has not confessing Lutheranism after Luther's death by its very publication of the Book of Concord established the fact that this "most theological Confession" (and this Confession above all) sets forth the true Lutheran doctrine in opposition to Romanism, Calvinism, and sectarianism? What of it if for political and other subjective reasons certain Lutheran groups have not subscribed to the Formula of Concord? That certainly does not make the Formula of Concord less authoritative.—Furthermore, Pastor Heick urges fellowship with the Reformed on the ground of the *una sancta*, deploring that "there is in the eyes of Missouri no way of establishing or even demonstrating unity of faith with a large number of true Christians so long as they remain within the Reformed denominations." He writes: "While such unity, as they hold, is a spiritual fact, it cannot be made outwardly visible so long as false doctrine prevails in the Church." He forgets, however, that the *una sancta* is not the visible Christian Church on earth, but the *ecclesia invisibilis*, or the *communio sanctorum*. If heterodox visible churches profess error, orthodox visible churches, mindful of the many Scripture warnings against unionism, must avoid them. In this matter the Word of God leaves them no other choice. We cannot understand how any Lutheran theologian can be blind to this Christian duty. Nor can we understand why the writer should say that "when these theologians [Missouri] speak of false doctrine, they, of course, assume that their own interpretation of the Bible is absolutely free from error." Is Lutheran teaching merely a matter of "Bible interpretation"? Do we Lutherans oppose to the Reformed errors mere subjective views or private interpretations? Do we not rather stand on clear declarations of God's Word which are unmistakable and decisive? Certainly, a Christian pastor is neither true to God, nor to himself, nor to Scripture, nor to the souls entrusted to his care, if he regards the sacred doctrines

of his Church merely as so many "interpretations," which may be right or wrong.

But we cannot discuss the entire article and all its incorrect and misleading statements. We are sure that Pastor Heick is not aware of the conclusions which needs must follow from his premises, namely, willful rejection of God's Word, doctrinal indifferentism and crass unionism. His treatise favors a unionistic form of Lutheranism, which earnest Christians certainly must reject. In reading the article, we were favorably impressed, however, with the writer's accuracy in frequently stating historical facts, even if these did not coincide with his own views. The position of the American Lutheran Church, and especially that of Dr. Reu, for example, is correctly presented, even when the author is obliged to quote so eminent a theologian against himself. But he goes too far when he speaks of Missouri's refusal to co-operate with dissenting Lutheran Synods *in externis*. As Dr. W. Arndt says (C. T. M., April, 1942, p. 305): "With respect to purely external matters there is some co-operation or co-ordination even now." We may add that there might be still more co-operation in external matters, though here also Dr. Arndt's warning applies: "The difficulty is that at times the line between purely external matters and matters involving fellowship is extremely difficult to draw" (*Ibid.*). We believe also that Pastor Heick overstates the case when in his discussion of the predestination controversy he says: "It was far above the ordinary pastor and congregation to pass an intelligent judgment on the exceedingly subtle definitions that were drawn up in this controversy." On the contrary, the basic questions at issue in that prolonged controversy were always very clear and were presented in sufficiently lucid language even in the various Missouri synodical essays. Men like Dr. Walther, Pastor F. Kuegele and, above all, Dr. F. Pieper were veritable masters in presenting the controverted questions in popular parlance to the common people.—What Pastor Heick writes of the Antichrist is diametrically opposed to the teachings of the Smalcald Articles and certainly does not clarify the issue at all. The "antichrists" of 1 John 2:18, it is true, embrace many errorists and enemies of the Church, but *the* Antichrist is a definite false prophet who cannot be distributed among various heretics. He cannot be, for example, Nero, Domitian, the Pope, the Turk, Lenin, Hitler, "Democracy," the "social gospel" all in one, as the writer claims. His view on this matter ultimately leads to utter confusion. Nor is it true that Luther regarded the Pope and the Turk alike as the Antichrist. At times, it must be admitted, Luther has a somewhat indefinite way of speaking; but his most definite declaration that *the Pope is the very Antichrist* (Triglot, p. 475) proves beyond a doubt what position on this point Luther held as early as 1537 (and certainly even before that).—Pastor Heick's view of the inspiration and authority of Scripture is painfully disappointing. If his attitude toward Scripture is accepted as normative in Lutheran circles, Scripture will be far less a rule of faith in the Lutheran Church than it is in the Church of Rome.—The writer closes his essay with the remark that "unity will not be achieved by drawing up new resolutions and adopting statements, declarations and agreements." This may be true as long as Lutherans

refuse to listen to clear Scripture teachings, but it is not true if Lutherans "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." As long as Lutherans are unwilling to accept Scripture, then also the writer's statement that "the unity of our Church lies in her historical Confessions" is not true, for then the historical Confessions simply do not mean anything. They are then merely scraps of paper and only serve as a sort of smoke screen to persons who do not care to take the Christian doctrine seriously.—When the author of the article says that "Lutherans in America have received no call to draw up new Confessions by which a cleavage is established between the ecumenical Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America," he ignores the fact that church cleavages are not caused by Confessions, but that Confessions merely bring out such cleavages in bold relief. To repeat the words of Dr. Arndt: "What is truly essential is that doctrinal unity be achieved before fellowship is declared to be established" (C. T. M., April, 1942, p. 305). Doctrinal unity expresses itself in Confessions and not otherwise.—In his final paragraphs Pastor Heick suggests an approach to unity by way of repentance. The call to unity is a "call to cleanse our hearts and sanctify our lives." If the reader turns to *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY* (May, 1942, p. 392), he will there read under **Brief Items** the timely remark of Dr. Zwemer: "From quite another quarter comes a similar note: 'It is not ethics that we need, but a more vertebrate creed.'" To which Dr. Arndt remarks: "Our slogan must be, No dogmaphobia!" There is indeed room for repentance in all Lutheran churches in our country, but repentance, first of all, for having committed the greatest of all sins—unbelief and ingratitude toward God's Word, which has led many to deny its inspiration and authority and to place reason above divine truth. To such repentance indeed "may our blessed Father in heaven help us!"

We are sorry to note that quite obviously some Lutherans are practicing what Pastor Heick is preaching. "Demonstrating his unity of faith with those in the Reformed denomination," the Rev. Otto H. Bostrom, pastor of Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, some time ago, held a union Lenten service in St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie "with two Episcopalian and one Presbyterian clergymen" (C. T. M., May, 1942, p. 392). "Why must such scandalous things happen?" asks the editor. Indeed, why must such scandalous things be defended as the right Christian and Lutheran approach to Lutheran unity? Enlightened Christians know that this is not the way to true church unity, but the broad way to utter church confusion, indifferentism, unionism, and grave offense.

Pastor Heick's article deserves careful study, for it clearly and definitely outlines a unionistic approach to church union which we have to be prepared to oppose.

J. T. M.

Dr. P. H. Buehring on Article II of the Formula of Concord.—In *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* (April, 1942) Dr. P. H. Buehring of Columbus, Ohio, publishes an essay under the heading "The Function of the Will in Conversion," which he delivered before a Pastors' Institute and an Inter-synodical Conference in Indiana. We are not so much concerned with the essay itself as rather with a note that introduces the essay. But

let us first say that the essay itself closes with a somewhat confusing thought. Dr. Buehring just before, in discussing the *Cur alii, alii non?* had stressed both the *gratia universalis* and the *sola gratia* in terms that permit no doubt as to his correct understanding of the point in question. He rejects Calvinism and synergism. "The grace of God is universal. God wants all men to be saved, and therefore He labors just as seriously to bring about the conversion of the one who rejects His grace as of the one who accepts it. We also know that the answer cannot be found in anything meritorious in those who are converted, whatever it might be conceived to be, that is recognized by God and rewarded by Him in bringing such men to faith. . . . The mystery remains, but it is neither a 'theological' nor a 'psychological' mystery, and any attempt to define it as such must inevitably lead to aberrations from the truth of either the *universalis gratia* or the *sola gratia*." So far, so good. But then the essayist continues: "The sainted Dr. R. C. H. Lenski, not long before he died, in a conversation with the writer, called it a *satanic* mystery, pointing out the inexplicable fact that Satan can have such power and influence *over some men* (italics our own) despite every effort of God to bring them to repentance and faith, that because of that influence they willfully and deliberately shut themselves out from the grace of God and cast aside the greatest gift that can ever be offered them in time and in eternity. It seems to this writer that we shall have to let the matter rest there." What is misleading in this paragraph is not merely the term *satanic mystery* (which *per se* might be understood correctly), but the modifying words *over some men*, which, if improperly pressed, might be made to signify that in *Satan's greater power over some men* we find an explanation of the mystery involved in the *Cur alii, alii non?* Let no one hereticize Dr. Lenski for making this statement, which indeed in a novel way calls attention to a most tragic fact—the mystery of Satan's power over those that are lost in spite of God's *vocatio seria et efficax*. Nevertheless, any attempt on our part to explain the mystery why, for example, David was saved and Saul was lost results in failure, or, what is worse, in self-deception and even error. The *modus loquendi* of our founding fathers: "It is a mystery because God has not given us the explanation in His Word," is after all the only correct and safe one, and this the Formula of Concord itself stresses with great seriousness.

It is, however, the introduction to his essay which we wish to bring to the attention of our readers. Dr. Buehring writes: "The Formula of Concord is the last and the longest and also the most theological of all the Lutheran Confessions contained in the Book of Concord of 1580. In recent years we have repeatedly heard and read some rather disparaging remarks about this great document. It is spoken of as antiquated, a typical example of the survival of medieval scholasticism in the Lutheran Church; it is criticized as being too much imbued with the spirit of dogmaticism, too narrowly intolerant, a formula of discord rather than of concord, for which there is really no place in twentieth-century Lutheranism. Yes, it is said that certain doctrines, such as that of the ubiquity of Christ's body and the *communicatio idiomatum*, or the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper, which are

set forth in this Confession, are doubtful, to say the least, from a Biblical point of view, and its insistence upon the total depravity of the natural man is characterized as 'hardly tenable today either on Christian, moral, or reasonably considered grounds' (cf. Vergilius Ferm, *What Is Lutheranism?* pp. 16, 250, 294). We venture to say that every Lutheran pastor who reads this essay, when he was ordained to the ministry, solemnly pledged his adherence to all the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, including the Formula of Concord, and promised before God and the Church to make all his teaching and preaching conform to the doctrine of these Confessions. Moreover, the American Lutheran Church, as well as the American Lutheran Conference, to which this Church belongs, and, in fact, all the Lutheran church bodies in this country in one way or in another officially accept the Formula of Concord together with all the other Lutheran Confessions as the 'true exposition and presentation of the faith once for all delivered to the saints' (Constitution of the American Lutheran Church, Article II, Section 2). Is it, then, perhaps time for us to reconsider our subscription to this Confession? If what the critics of this venerable document say is true, should we not inaugurate a movement in the Church to eliminate this Confession from the list of those to which we pledge our adherence? Is it honest and honorable to ask or to pretend subscription to a Confession of Faith, some doctrines of which we can no longer hold? Considerations such as these motivated the writer in preparing this study of Article II of the Formula. The substance of it was delivered as a lecture in September, 1941, at the Pastors' Institute in the Columbus Seminary and again at an Intersynodical Conference of pastors of the Missouri Synod, the United Lutheran Church, and the American Lutheran Church last fall in Bloomington, Ind. The interest with which it was received on both occasions and the unanimous approval given to its contents have encouraged the writer to offer it for publication in this journal. The Formula of Concord wants to be *studied* in order to be appreciated!" We cordially subscribe to this last statement and express the hope that in view of the fact that the Formula of Concord is being challenged today as a Confession not genuinely Lutheran many pastors also in our circles will take it up for careful study in connection with the many problems that face us in these changing times when the Church is called upon to present with new emphasis the fundamental doctrines of sin and grace. We have always found the Formula of Concord supremely valuable both on account of the doctrines which it sets forth and the clear and certain expressions in which its glorious teachings are presented.

J. T. M.

A Dark Picture.—All of us who are not in intimate touch with the realities of life as they are seen by the city missionary and the social worker must stand aghast at a grand jury report touching the abortion crime published in *America* (Roman Catholic) May 2, 1942. Our pastors should be given the information contained in this report:

"Although there is evidence that fees are as low as \$10, including the anesthetic, they have been known to go as high as \$2,500. \$500 for an abortion would not be uncommon. \$250 is a frequent price. A con-

siderable percentage of abortion patients are charged \$100, but the bulk of the fees run from about \$50 to \$60.

"Yearly incomes of abortion specialists would be in the same numerical brackets with earnings of heads of large corporations had they ever been publicized. There is testimony that the abortion specialist with a normal business averages about \$25,000 a year and that doctors whose clientele came from larger income groups earned from \$150,000 to \$250,000 a year.

"An abortionist who charges \$50 to \$60 for an operation, after he has split the fee with the feeder and deducted running expenses, receives about \$15 profit. As has been stated before, there are abortion specialists who perform about four thousand operations a year. Such a specialist would net about \$60,000 a year, even on a modest scale of fees.

"One abortionist, who had been financially successful in the business, built a house costing \$165,000, referred to in the profession as 'the house that abortions built.' Another doctor, one of the earliest in the business, amassed approximately \$1,000,000 up until 1921.

"One of the best known induction specialists (*induction* means the extremely dangerous removal of the fetus after a gestatory period of three months) of New York was reputed to have earned over \$1,000,000. When questioned as to the truth of this report, he made no denial . . . another was charged with owing the Federal Government \$850,000 in back taxes." A.

Why do University Students Show Remissness in Attending Church Services? In *America* a writer submits the ideas of a Y. M. C. A. executive secretary at the University of Minnesota with respect to the question mentioned. The secretary enumerates six reasons why students lose churchgoing habits. They are the following:

"In the first place, there is a psychological reason. Churches in the State are apt to be rather conservative. They represent to the student a certain degree of authority. The student of adolescent age revolts temporarily from the restraint of authority. His new environment gives him a certain release from parental authority.

"Second, religious education has not been related too closely with life's problems. Consequently, when a student comes to the University, he does not see clearly the relation of religion to his immediate problems.

"Third, college training is in terms of experimental thinking. Much of our religious instruction is in traditional terms and hence is not in harmony with experimental thinking.

"Fourth, the University student comes into contact with many individuals. He rather quickly loses denominational loyalties. Religious instruction, however, is connected with denominationalism.

"Fifth, many students have the feeling that the more intelligent people dissociate themselves from active religious participation. There is the wish to imitate.

"Sixth, religion on the college campus definitely suffers from the competition offered by other campus activities."

Whatever may be the reason in the case of an individual student for his lack of eagerness to attend divine services, let us all realize that uni-

versity students are particularly exposed to spiritual perils, and let us gladly assist university pastors who under the guidance of our synodical committee (the Rev. R. W. Hahn, Secretary) endeavor to keep our young men and women close to the Savior. A.

Church Conditions in Norway.—It is difficult for us here in the United States to see clearly what is happening these days in the Lutheran Church of Norway. Bishop Eiwind Berggrav was imprisoned when he refused to obey an order of the Nazi government pertaining to church affairs but after he had been at the concentration camp a week, he was set free. Seven bishops resigned on February 24. Their places were taken by so-called acting bishops appointed by Quisling. Recently it was reported that Quisling was offering to remove again these "acting bishops" and to put in their places ecclesiastical leaders who would declare their loyalty to the present government even though they had previously indicated their full endorsement of the course taken by the seven bishops. Those who know conditions do not think that the respective leaders will be willing to make such a declaration of loyalty. Another attempt to make the state more popular was undertaken by the government when it announced that it would divide a certain bishopric into two parts, giving each part a bishop and yielding to popular desire. It is very doubtful that the move will mean any gain for the government. A.

Mormonism and Unionism in Liberal Churches.—The *Christian Beacon* (May 28, 1942) contains an enlightening article on "Mormonism Examined in the Light of the Word of God." The reason why the article is published is well explained in an editorial, entitled "Mormonism," which we here offer to our readers on account of the important lessons it contains. The editorial says:

"The Mormons are most active missionaries. They come to Christians for the purpose of winning them to the Mormon faith. The article by Mr. Ohman was written first in an open letter and published in the public press in Montrose, Pa., where he is the pastor of a Baptist church. A faithful reader of the *Beacon*, in sending to us this account, wrote as follows: 'All winter two Mormon missionaries have been in town [Montrose, Pa.]. Personally they are young men, splendid in appearance, and the soul of social courtesy; but they are the cause of quite a lot of funny business. Finally it got to the point where they were singing in the Methodist church choir and in the week were calling on Methodist members. At that point the pastor got his back fur up. Among other things, the Episcopal minister up here has sponsored them at some meetings, one of which, I understand, was a youth rally at Harford, a little town about thirty miles from here. Now, right under our noses, they have been allowed to hold a conference for a week at Silver Lake and are given a two-column write-up. You know right here in Susquehanna County is where their golden plates were supposed to have been found, and they are making quite a feature of the fact. A trip will be taken to Palmyra, N. Y., and all over where Joseph Smith stayed when he lived here. Well, of course, folks up this way don't like it. There are people here, around ninety years old, who

do not hesitate to say what a farce it was in those days and what an old-timer he was.'

"It is amazing how ministers of the Gospel apparently know so little about the error and unbelief and 'salvation by works' of Mormonism that they will welcome their missionaries into the churches, choirs, pulpits, etc. The Mormons are making such headway because they know what they believe, even though it is contrary to the Word of God; and they push it and fight for it. When they come to Christians who do not know what the Christian faith is, but who have only vague or general ideas, and are not grounded in the faith, they find a fertile field for their Mormon propaganda.

"Mormonism definitely is Satanic at root, and when people become involved in it, they are in a sense hypnotized by it. Let Christians turn to their Bible and know it and read it and understand it and contend for it as never before."

Among the antitheses between Mormonism and the Bible the following may be helpful to our pastors because of the conciseness with which they are stated: "1. Mormonism teaches that Joseph Smith saw two gods in his vision. The Bible says: The Lord, our God, is one Lord. 2. Smith shattered the doctrine of the Trinity. The Bible teaches Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God. 3. Smith says: God is like a man, with flesh and bones and a body. The Bible says: God is a Spirit. 4. Smith teaches that faith in Christ is not enough for salvation. The Bible teaches: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. 5. Smith says that marriage is for eternity, the ceremony valid only when solemnized in Mormon temples by a Mormon. The Bible teaches: In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage. 6. Smith says: Still more revelations are coming besides those in the Bible. The Bible says: If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book."

This antithesis suffices to show that Mormonism is fundamentally paganistic in its teaching on sin and salvation. Let Lutheran pastors not forget that Mormon missionaries preferably proselyte among Lutheran church members.

J. T. M.

Cardinal Forbids Bible Reading. — *The Christian Beacon* (May 14, 1942) reports: "In a communication against 'heretical propaganda' Cardinal Villeneuve of Canada actually forbade the reading and dissemination of the New Testament in French. In speaking of the Testament and tracts which the Bible and Tract Depot had been distributing, the cardinal said that the priests should 'insist particularly on the danger to which those who glance through this heretical literature expose the precious treasure of the true faith. They will recall that this sort of literature can neither be read, kept, nor given to others in good conscience, and that the best thing to do if we are insulted by having these writings sent to us is to throw them in the fire.' He reminded the clergy that the Bible needs to be explained and annotated by the Church. 'The Church exercises this authority to teach,' says the Cardinal, 'by voice of the popes, bishops, councils, fathers, and doctors.'"

The news is of importance in view of the work of the Catholic Action, which at present is exceedingly zealous in spreading the revised Catholic New Testament among the members of the Church. But the Catholic Bible is annotated and annotated so that the specific anti-Christian doctrine is brought to the attention of the Catholic reader, who when reading, for example, Rom. 3:20, the possibly strongest declaration of the *sola fide*, must swallow the following poisonous pill to preserve for himself the "precious treasure of the true faith": "It does not follow from St. Paul's statement that no man is justified by the works of the Law, that good works are not necessary for salvation. The justification of which St. Paul here speaks is the infusion of sanctifying grace which alone renders a person supernaturally pleasing in the sight of God. This cannot be obtained either by the observance of the Law or by any other work of unregenerate man." This denial of the true meaning of the text is diabolically clever as is Rome's entire apologetics and, above all, its polemics against the specific Lutheran doctrines which glorify Christ as the only Mediator. We have no reason whatever to weaken in the teaching of our Confessions that the Pope is the very Antichrist.

J. T. M.

Brief Items. — When recently at Gettysburg Theological Seminary of the U. L. C. A. a chapel built in colonial style and costing \$150,000 was dedicated, Bishop Edwin Holt Hughes of the Methodist Church gave the lectures on Preaching during the annual pastors' week which was observed in connection with the dedication. How can U. L. C. A. pastors and professors, if they are convinced that the Lutheran teachings are right and that the distinctive Methodist teachings are erroneous, invite a Methodist bishop to instruct them on preaching? Here we have an incident that points to the cleavage existing in the Lutheran Church of America.

A correspondent of the *Lutheran Companion* denounces an article written by the Rev. O. W. Linnemeier of the Missouri Synod and printed in the *Lutheran Companion* in which the course of pastors who bury everybody they are requested to bury is criticized. The indignant writer says, "It appears that as a Christian Church we are again approaching, if we have not already arrived, at the state of hypocrisy which the formal Jewish Church so well enjoyed during the time of Christ's ministry on the earth. . . . It is hard for me to believe that a Lutheran pastor would refuse to officiate at the funeral of anyone." We inquire, Is the writer of the letter actually advocating that a Christian funeral be given to infidels, scoffers, and other enemies of the Church? Against whom would the charge of hypocrisy have to be directed in such a case, against the pastor who refuses to grant such a person a Christian funeral or against the one who blithely consigns the body of such an enemy of the Church to the grave with Christian honors?

A.



Book Review — Literatur

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Walks with Our Lord through John's Gospel. By Erling C. Olsen. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 2 Volumes. $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$. Vol. I, 328 pages; Vol. II, 323 pages. Price, \$3.00.

Paul's Swan Song. A Study of Second Timothy. By Oscar R. Mangum. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 136 pages, $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Price, \$1.00.

It is a significant thing that books of this type are still appearing on the market. Apparently there is still some interest in expositions of the Bible, and from the Fundamentalist angle at that. The two volumes on the Gospel of John, comprising 651 pages, present the rather ambitious effort to cover all the chief points of this most "spiritual Gospel," as Luther calls it, in a total of 100 talks or sketches, for each of which the author offers a striking caption, such as "A Trek through Samaria," "Snooping Religionists," "The Tragedy of a Mistaken Parentage," "The First Blackout in Palestine," etc. Fortunately many of the topics are not quite so sensational. The style of the author is informal, even sprightly at times, and one might learn something from this lively way of putting things. However, in his effort to be striking the author sometimes becomes inaccurate. In fact, the reader who is trained in the clear distinctions of systematic theology must constantly be on the alert, since the discussion frequently fails to distinguish clearly. Some of the statements made are actually peculiar, as when we are told that chapter 1, verse 5, refers to the preincarnation ministry of Jesus (p. 21), when he offers misleading remarks about "children of God" and "eternal judgment" (p. 110), or when he asserts that "the Gospel begins at the cross" (p. 111). Both volumes abound in such peculiar assertions, and one grows restive in his search for clearness and Scripturalness. And the chief defect of the author's presentation is his insistence on the Reformed view of the Sacraments. In his eagerness to disprove the clear words of Christ concerning the efficacy of Holy Baptism (cp. Eph. 5:25, 26) he even goes so far as to identify the *water* with the Word of God, insisting that *water* symbolizes the Word of God and evidently not realizing that the plain text in John 3:6 makes his interpretation ridiculous. (P. 87 f.) With regard to the Lord's Supper also, which he discusses in connection with John 6, under the heading "The Communion Table," the author blandly states: "It is impossible, literally, for us to eat His flesh and to drink His blood, but we can do that which is symbolized by bread and wine." The fact that the author teaches the deity of Christ and the atonement through His blood compensates, in a measure, for the many confusing and inadequate statements, but he spoils a fine exposition of chapter 3:22 f. by a declaration of his unionism: "If there is one thing in the experience of this man for which I praise God, it is the fact that, though I have consistently

avoided taking any denominational stand, I have been privileged to minister the Word of God in various denominational churches, irrespective of ceremonial barriers." (P.117.) A very discriminating student may get some good points out of this exposition of the Gospel of John, but he is bound to exercise the greatest of care.—Mangum's exposition of Second Timothy is, as he himself states, "in reality a footnote to the commentary of Dr. John Priest Greene, which is now out of print." The exposition offers a minimum of scientific material, especially in the field of philology, emphasizing, rather, the practical and devotional use of the text. There are no profound exegetical discussions nor searching doctrinal elaborations. There are many stimulating and thought-provoking statements and paragraphs in the book, as when the author declares: "Our mass evangelism yesterday was largely responsible for the mighty host of marginal members of our churches today." (P.13.) "Adventuring with God cannot fail to thrill the sincere heart. The days of adventure are not over, nor are all the pioneers dead. There are frontiers of the soul not yet visited." (P.16.) "Commit to others what you have been taught. This is the only apostolic succession we find in Scripture—the succession of the truth." (P.45.) "If we name the name of Jesus, it means that we are claiming relationship with Him. Then by our living let us prove to the world that we are His." (P.81.) Too bad that the author's Reformed theology, especially on the Sacraments, is brought out in his exposition, as when he states: "The Lord's Supper is in reality a feast of memory." (P.55.) "Martin Luther split Protestant Christianity wide open in his contention about the bread of the Lord's Supper: 'This is My body.' His literalism drove Zwingli and all his followers away. They [the latter] contended that the bread was a symbol of His body, and this contention has won the field." (P.73.) "We believe that there are only two ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, but these are not sacraments at all. They are for Christians and have no saving power." (P.97.) It is too bad also that the author's concept of Inspiration is altogether inadequate to do justice to the clear statement of 2 Tim. 3:14-17. He denies Verbal Inspiration, although he asserts that he accepts Plenary Inspiration, an expression which certainly is a misnomer as used by him. In the case of this book also it is only the careful student who will be able to separate the wheat from the chaff.

P. E. KRETZMANN

The Atonement. By Loraine Boettner, D.D. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 136 pages, 5½×7. Price, \$1.00.

"It hardly seems possible," says Dr. Boettner, "that with this central truth written so plainly and so repeatedly across the pages of Scripture, any honest or serious-minded persons could arise, as do the Unitarians and Modernists, and declare that the essence of Christianity consists in our following the example of Christ in lives of social service or that the chief purpose of the Church is to build a new social order in this world." Again: "That the doctrine of the atonement has been neglected and obscured in our day is very evident. Only rarely do we hear a sermon or see an article printed on it. Yet it is the very heart of the Christian message, and without it the Gospel is powerless" (pp. 32, 134).

For these reasons this book was written. And those who preach sermons and write articles on this subject will find helpful material here. The doctrine itself, *vicarious* atonement, and the related and subsidiary articles, for instance, original sin (the imputation of Adam's guilt and total depravity), the deity of Christ, together with the refutation of "the erroneous theories of the atonement" (the moral influence theory, the governmental theory, and the mystical theories) are here forcefully presented. All the force of Scripture is put back of it.—Portions of the book, however, will have to be laid aside as useless and harmful, those which deny the Scriptural teaching on the *extent* of the atonement. We have here the old Calvinistic denial of universal grace. "Nowhere does Scripture either directly assert or imply that Christ died in the stead of all men or with the purpose of saving all men." (P. 90.) That in the face of John 1:29; 2 Cor. 5:19; 1 John 2:2! This, too: "In a number of the supposedly universalistic passages in which 'all' or 'all men' are mentioned the reference is not to all men individually, but to 'all kinds of men,' Jews and Gentiles, 'without reference to nationality, color, or social position, and to women and children as well'" (p. 89).—By the way, we heartily agree with Dr. Boettner when he tells the Arminians that they have no right to fault the Calvinist for his refusal to teach universal grace, since they do the very same thing: "In reality the Arminians do limit the atonement as certainly as do Calvinists. The Arminians limit its *power* or inherent value; for they say that in itself it does not save anybody, that in each individual in order to become effective it must be supplemented by faith and evangelical obedience on the part of the person and that each person is sovereign in determining whether or not he will have faith in Christ. Calvinists limit the atonement quantitatively, but not qualitatively; Arminians limit it qualitatively, but not quantitatively. The fact of the matter is that Arminians actually place more severe limitations on the atonement than do Calvinists. According to the Arminian theory the atonement has simply made it possible for all men to co-operate with divine grace by doing meritorious works and thus secure their own salvation" (p. 93 f.). That is what the Lutheran theologians have been telling the synergists. Synergism denies, in effect, that God is willing to save all men; He is willing to save only those who are able to co-operate with saving grace.—We read on page 97: "There are in the final analysis just two views of the atonement which are held by Christians: the Calvinistic and the Arminian." No, there is a third teaching. The Lutherans teach, with the Calvinists, the *sola gratia* but refuse to deny, with the Calvinists, the *gratia universalis*. They teach, with the Arminians and synergists, that Christ redeemed all men but refuse to deny, with the Arminians and synergists, the *sola gratia*. We want people to know that there is a theology which is immune against the rationalistic argument of Calvinism that, since salvation is throughout the work of God, the fact that not all are saved proves that God is not willing to save all men; and immune against the rationalistic argument of the Arminian-synergistic school that, since God is willing to save all men, the reason why not all are saved must be that some are not quite as corrupt as others and are able to effect a better behavior than others.

TH. ENGELDER

"Jehovah's Witnesses." By Prof. F. E. Mayer. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 52 pages. Price, 25 cents.

The reviewer was present when the contents of this brochure were read before the Western District Pastoral Conference as an essay, which so impressed the hearers that they asked Concordia Publishing House to publish it in pamphlet form. Since "Judge" Rutherford, the past leader of the sect, is now dead, it is uncertain how prominent and dangerous "Jehovah's Witnesses" will be in the future. But no doubt they will continue to spread their tenets and harass our congregations, so that a reliable booklet exposing their errors will be necessary. Professor Mayer has gone to great pains in proving the unchristian and antichristian character of this pernicious cult from the writings of their leaders, and nothing of importance in refuting their blasphemous false doctrines has been omitted. The brochure contains nine chapters with two appendices, "Conclusions," a most valuable *resumé*, and "Notes and References," additional references and quotations from the books of the cult. We recommend this brochure to both pastors and laymen for careful study.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

David Livingstone — Missionary and Explorer. By Basil Miller. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 163 pages. \$1.00.

The name of David Livingstone (1813—1873) has a way of lifting the heart of a Christian. He has been called the greatest man in the history of the nineteenth century, a statement that depends largely on one's viewpoint, of course, when one considers other men of that century, such as Napoleon, Lincoln, Gladstone, Bismarck, and others. The fact that he was an explorer, scientist, and geographer, as well as missionary, has caused some to underemphasize his missionary work. However, in Livingstone's own opinion, everything that he did was secondary and subservient to the main objective of his life—to bring the Gospel to the African heathen. The present biography properly makes frequent reference to and gives quotations from Livingstone's writings and personal diary.

W. G. POLACK

David Brainerd, the Man of Prayer. By Oswald J. Smith. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Stiff paper cover. 86 pages. 75 cents.

The life of David Brainerd (1718—1747) is of perennial interest, not particularly because of the great, immediate results of his mission work among the American Indians, but on account of the unusual zeal and fervor for souls which drove him on and on relentlessly until he virtually burned himself out in his work. The fact that this volume is not merely a recital of his life story, but rather a compilation from his diary as recorded in the *Works of Jonathan Edwards* makes it especially valuable. Brainerd's life story has been a source of inspiration to many. William Carey read it and went to India; Robert McCheyne read it and went to the Jews; Henry Martyn read his journal and went to India and Persia, his short life paralleling that of Brainerd in a remarkable way.

W. G. POLACK

Story Talks for Children. By Karl Rest, Pastor of Salem Church, Wanatah, Indiana. Junior Sermons for Boys and Girls. The Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio. 135 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Price, \$1.00.

These sermonets for children undoubtedly "catch and sustain the interest of the junior boys and girls." As efforts "to grapple in a realistic manner" with problems of Christian life "on the level of childhood experience and in terms understood by children," these addresses are unquestionable successes. Even if their loyalty to the text is sometimes only nominal, nevertheless in their approach to the junior problems they treat, in their abundant use of well-chosen illustrative material, and in the generally direct drive of the subject matter toward a definite application, they excite admiration as models in method. Every pastor who undertakes the difficult task of holding children's attention sermonically will be profited by a study of this little volume.

On the other hand, the steady omission of justification in favor of sanctification and the failure to use the dynamic of the Cross in behalf of the ethics urged is an oversight no less than extraordinary. It is the more remarkable, as a blunder, since one of two Christmas addresses (pp. 133, 134) speaks movingly of forgiveness and the sacrifice of Calvary, so demonstrating that the author does believe in and preach this basic Christian truth.

RICHARD A. JESSE

Life on the Highest Plane. By Ruth Paxson. Published by the Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago, Ill. 310 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$. Price, \$3.00.

This is a book enjoying a wide circulation. Originally published in three volumes in 1928, the lectures are now combined in one book, which is being highly recommended by Fundamentalist periodicals. It is a dangerous book. I do not refer to such untenable views as, e. g., that "man is a trinity, spirit, soul, and body" (pp. 32-36) or that Is. 14:12-14 and Ez. 28:15, 16 describe the rebellion of Satan against God. Nor do I refer primarily to the millennialistic outlook in the last chapter of the book, where the return of Christ is said to "usher in the last of the divinely ordered ages which condition human life upon the earth; it will register the answer to the prayer 'Thy kingdom come,' and it will mark the fulfillment of the prophecy that Jesus Christ, as the seed of David, should be King over His own kingdom upon this earth" (p. 275). "When Christ, the King, reigns, there will be social reconstruction" (p. 280), "material prosperity" (p. 281). There is a far greater danger hidden in this book. The entire description of the life of natural man and that of a Christian is a dangerous blending of truth and falsehood. The author speaks of "human life on three planes" and writes: "The Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul has divided the human race into three clearly distinguished groups, and every member of the human family, irrespective of racial or natural inheritance, belongs to one of these groups. God's description of each is so accurate and so true that every person may know with certitude in which class he is" (p. 13). While on the basis of 2 Cor. 2:14 she correctly tells us "that the natural man refuses to receive the things of the Spirit, they appear mere foolishness unto him. More than that, he cannot know

them because it takes a spiritual mind to discern spiritual truth, and he is without the Holy Spirit" (p.14), she writes on pages 41 and 42: "God offers unto every man the gift of eternal life which he has power to accept or to refuse. To accept it opens the way for him to the highest plane of life, that of the spiritual man; to refuse it leaves him on the lowest plane of life, that of the natural man. The natural man refuses the gift of eternal life, therefore he is 'dead.' Every person who has not accepted from the Father the gift of eternal life bestowed upon him in Christ Jesus, the Son, is described by God as 'dead.'" Scripture rather tells us that since natural man is dead in sins, he refuses and cannot but refuse the gift of eternal life. Only when God has quickened him does he accept this gift.

"The carnal man," we read, "is a Christian because he has obtained sonship through faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior. Therefore he is rightly related to God. But he has entered into neither the possessions nor the privileges of a son, and his practices are not those becoming his position in the family of God. . . . The carnal man has been renewed through the new birth, but he is still a 'babe in Christ.' He sits at the table of the Lord to partake of His bounties, but he has no appetite nor capacity for 'strong meat.' He subsists on 'milk.' He is not a full grown man. He actually has been united to the Lord Jesus, but he is an 'adulterer,' loving the world and caring far more for its people and pleasures than for Jesus Christ (James 4:4)" (p.19). What a flagrant misapplication and garbling of the apostle's word. James says explicitly that these "adulterers" are enemies of God. The author calmly assures them that they are "rightly related to God," "united to the Lord Jesus." Yet on page 197 we read: "Men may hold two opinions about 'the world' but not so with God. In James 4:4 he at least leaves no Christian any room whatever for argument regarding his attitude toward and relationship to 'the world' but declares in words of transparent clearness that any Christian who maintains friendship with the world is guilty of adulterous infidelity in his relationship to Christ." And then Rom. 7:22, 23 and Gal. 5:17 are quoted to prove that one of the marks of the carnal Christian is "a life of unceasing conflict" (pp.189,190). What hopeless confusion!

The spiritual man is defined as follows: "The spiritual man having taken the crucified, risen, glorified Christ as Savior, Lord, and Life, lives his life wholly unto God. The Lord Jesus is the center of his life and has undivided control over his whole being. Jesus Christ dominates his thoughts, affections, speech, will, and actions. He has become a partaker of the nature of God so that there are two natures in the spiritual man, but the divine nature is sovereign" (pp.17,18). And the marks of a spiritual Christian? "It is a life of abiding peace" (p.200), "of habitual victory" (p.201). "Victory need not be intermittent but may be habitual. God can cause us *always* in all places, under all circumstances, at all times, in all things, 'to triumph in Christ,' for 'He is able to *save* to the uttermost them that come unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them'" (p.202). "The carnal man [Note, not the natural man is spoken of] is under the power of the law of sin. It operates in his life, bringing him much of the

time under its dominion. But there is another and a higher law at work in the believer, and as he yields himself to its mighty power, the spiritual man is delivered from the law of sin and death. Herein lies his habitual victory over all known sin" (p.203). What sad confusion! Into what unfathomable depths of despair may this description of a "spiritual Christian" hurl a believing child of God who in spite of his daily battle against sin and his daily struggle for perfection cannot attain "habitual victory" and whose peace of conscience is often disturbed by the memories of sins and failings and shortcomings! As long as he lives, even the spiritual Christian, who as far as his new man is concerned does not sin and cannot sin, will have to fight that very battle described by that truly spiritual Christian Paul, Rom.7:18-23; and he will often sigh with Paul, Rom.7:24; yet he will always find comfort and consolation for his conscience harassed by sins daily committed and strength for renewed strife and evernew victories in the precious blood of His Savior, Rom.7:25.

TH. LAETSCH

They Called Him Father. The Life Story of John Christian Frederick Heyer. By E. Theodore Bachmann. Published by the Muhlenburg Press. Philadelphia. 342 pages. \$1.75.

This biography of "Father" Heyer (1793—1873), the first missionary in foreign fields from the Lutheran Church in America, was published as a contribution to the centennial of the beginning of Heyer's work in India. Aside from the many interesting facts brought forth in this well-written biography, concerning Heyer's antecedents, his family life, his personal interests and peculiarities, we believe that there are particularly two features of the volume that make it a book that should be in every pastor's library. The first in Heyer's ministry in the East and his work as pioneer home missionary in the Middle West and the Northwest of our country. The author gives authentic information on church conditions, the language question, revivals, etc., as they affected the Lutheran churches in the East, information that is the result of careful historical research. As we are acquainted with the author personally and have had many pleasant and profitable discussions with him on questions pertaining to the history of our Church in this country, we know that he is a very painstaking student of the available sources in this field. The second in Heyer's work of establishing the first American Lutheran mission field in far-off India, a field which today numbers some 200,000 Christians. His first term as foreign missionary covered the period from 1841 to 1846, the second from 1847 to 1857. The next twelve years were spent here in the home mission field, during which he founded the Minnesota Synod. His last term in India was from 1869 to 1871. He was nearly 77 years old when he appeared before the sessions of the Pennsylvania Ministerium and pleaded that the Rajah-mundry field should not be transferred to the Church Missionary Society of the Anglicans, and he himself offered to go back to India to reorganize the work. "Although I am nearly 77 now, I am willing to go to India myself and reorganize that work." "Will Father Heyer tell us how soon that would be?" "I am ready now!" That illustrates the missionary zeal of this interesting and inspiring character.

W. G. POLACK

Bible Plants for American Gardens. By Eleanor Anthony King. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1941. 203 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$. Price, \$2.00.

This is an interesting, valuable, and, in fact, a delightful book. One might think, from its title, that the contents would be just about what one might look for in a good Bible dictionary or cyclopedia with regard to the plant life of the Holy Land. But the author not only presents a most comprehensive background for her entire topic, she manages to arouse interest in the flowers and trees and shrubs which she so skillfully describes. The fruits, the trees, the herbs, the flowers, the perfumes and precious woods, the reeds and the rushes, even the thorns and thistles, they all are presented to the delighted reader in a fascinating array. And all through the book the author offers some very practical suggestions about planting gardens with Bible plants to give a better appreciation and understanding of the Bible stories in which they are mentioned. It occurred to us that one of the finest things many parish-schools might do, if they have a small piece of ground for a garden, is to start a corner for the cultivation of Bible flowers, herbs, shrubs, and even trees. It would certainly be one of the finest ways of stimulating the interest of children in a most interesting topic and would enliven Bible-history instruction. Some of the less hardy plants and flowers mentioned in the Bible may even be grown in the average home. The author shows a picture of a fig-tree only eight inches high and yet showing all the characteristics, even the fruit as referred to in the Bible. If nothing else, the book will prove a valuable addition to the library of a school or a Sunday-school for the use of both the older pupils and the teachers.

P. E. KRETZMANN

Poems with Power to Strengthen the Soul. Compiled by James Mudge. Abingden-Cokesbury Press. New York. 308 pages. \$1.39.

This is a revised and enlarged edition of this collection comprising poets "from Horace and Homer to our modern minstrels," indexed according to authors and first lines. The selections are grouped topically under such headings as Consecration, Love, Hope, Jesus, etc. The price is very reasonable. Our pastors will find many worth-while and quotable pieces among the many items offered.

W. G. POLACK

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

Dare to Decide. By Ralph W. Neighbor. 135 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Price, \$1.00.

Fishing for Men. By H. W. Ellis. 187 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Price, \$1.50.

A Course in Bible Doctrine and Missions for Juniors. By Hilda I. Copley. 69 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Price, 35 cents.

Movie Mad America. By U. E. Harding. 55 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Price, 25 cents.

